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MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

#302 JULY 2008

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

SACRED SHOCK-For A Living-EP	INMATES-Now We Talking Hardcore-EP
BRAIN KILLER-demo	AMÖBA-En Doende Varld-EP
DOUBLE NEGATIVE-Raw Energy-EP	HERESY-The Final Hour-EP
MEANWHILE-all 3 LPs	INSOMNIO-EP / LOS MONJO-45
XYX-Sistema de Terminacion Sexual-EP	KNUCKLEHEAD-Lost-CD

TIM BROOKS

PIERCED ARROWS-LP	KNIFE IN THE LEG-Bloodlust-EP
NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE-LP	SMART COPS-Sudore A Merenda-EP
COCK SPARRER-Did You Have A Nice Life Without Me-45	THE HEARTBURNS-Fixin' to Die-LP
CHRIST ON PARADE-Loud & Live-KFJC Pit-LP	THE DARVOCETS-Are New Wave-LP
INSOMNIO-EP / SACRED SHOCK-EP	MARKED MEN/AIRFIX KITS-live

MITCH CARDWELL

A.H. KRAKEN-LP	HIROSHIMA ROCKS AROUND-45
EAT SKULL-LP & 7"	ELECTRIC BUNNIES-EP
XYX-Sistema de Terminaci´On Sexual-EP	BLANK ITS-Windows Are Dirty/Divorce-45
JACUZZI BOYS-Ghost Ghost-EP	THE OKMONIKS-Party Fever!!!-LP
BILLY BAO-Accumulation-EP	MAYYORS-live

PAUL CURRAN & ARIEL AWESOME

OFF GETTIN' HITCHED

JONATHAN FLOYD

OUT TO LUNCH

LAYLA GIBBON

DOUBLE NEGATIVE-Raw Energy-EP	PIERCED ARROWS-LP
LOS MONJO-Cobardes/La Peor Pesadilla-45	V/A-Des Jeunes Gens Mödernes 1978-1983-LP
INMATES-Now We Talking Hardcore-EP	EAT SKULL-LP & 7"
XYX-Sistema de Terminación Sexual-EP	THE DAILY VOID-Man/Machine-EP
INSOMNIO-Walking On The String-EP	MENTHOLS-848/Hey Hey Hey-45

CHRIS HUBBARD

A.H. KRAKEN-LP	MEANWHILE-All 3 LPs
XYX-Sistema de Terminación Sexual-EP	COCK SPARRER-45
INSOMNIO-Walking on the String-EP	HERESY-The Final Hour-EP
DAYLIGHT ROBBERY-Washtenaw-EP	DARK AGES-4 Songs-EP
DOUBLE NEGATIVE-Raw Energy-EP	GRASS WIDOWS/VIVIAN GIRLS/TRAGEDY-live

KENNY KAOS

THE SHITTY LIMITS-Espionage-EP	STEAKNIVES-We Can't Stand This World-EP
COKEROCKET-Give It All Up-EP	NARCOLEPTIC YOUTH-Barbi In Bondage-EP
THE NYMPHETS-Feels Like Motherfuckers/Bekki-Anne-45	VALOIDS-Kick My Face-EP
BLANK ITS-Windows Are Dirty/Divorce-45	THE OKMONIKS-Party Fever!!!-LP
COCK SPARRER-45	THE JONESES-Criminals-LP

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- Everywhere else: $10 each (air). 12 issue sub for $112 (airmail only). 6 issue sub for $59 (airmail only).

Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE: #148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 160-163, 166, 172, 175, 179-197, 199-181, 184-210, 214-215, 218-227, 229-301 **See page 4 for pricing and other info.**

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1/6 page: (2.5" x 5") $30
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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only , or demo releases to the address on the previous page.

CAROLYN KEDDY

EAT SKULL-Sick To Death-LP	BILLY BAO-Accumulation-EP
PIERCED ARROWS-Straight to the Heart-LP	EAT SKULL-Dead Families-EP
MENTHOLS-848/Hey Hey Hey-45	CULTURCIDE-Gigs For An Imaginary Audience-CD
BLANK ITS-45 / THEE VICARS-…Let Us Play-EP	KILLER'S KISS-Abused/Mondo Jobless-45
THE DAILY VOID-Man/Machine-EP	*"Warts and All: The Films of Danny Plotnik"*-DVD

RAY LUJAN

BALLPOINT-Get Loose-CD	THE CHORDS-The Mod Singles Collection-CD
LET'S DANCE-Summer Breeze-EP / VIVIAN GIRLS-EP	DESTROY EVERYTHING-Freedom of Speech Means Talk is Cheap-CD
KUNG FU MONKEYS-Christmas For Breakfast-CD	MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE-OK Smarty Pants-CD
ANGRY 4 LIFE-Some Songs We Recorded 2004-2006-CD	HOT CHA CHA-Rifle, I Knew You Were Just A Pistol-CD
V/A-Dancehall Troops Volume 3-CD	GUITAR GANGSTERS-Razor Cuts-Best Of-CD

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

INSOMNIO-Walking On The String-EP	CHRIST ON PARADE-LP
DAYLIGHT ROBBERY-Washtenaw-EP	ICON GALLERY-Declination/No More-45
V/A-Des Jeunes Gens Mödernes 1978-1983-LP	XYX-Sistema de Terminacion Sexual-EP
THE DARVOCETS-Are New Wave-LP	VIVIAN GIRLS-Wild Eyes-EP
PIERCED ARROWS-LP	COCK SPARRER-45

NICK MANGEL

SOMEWHERE IN IRELAND

BRUCE ROEHRS

DOUBLE NEGATIVE-Raw Energy-EP	PIERCED ARROWS-LP / COCK SPARRER-45
NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE-LP	HERESY-The Final Hour-EP
SACRED SHOCK-EP / INSOMNIO-EP	MEANWHILE-all 3 LPs
SMART COPS-Sudore A Merenda-EP	BRAIN KILLER-demo
ANTiSEEN/HAMMERLOCK-live	INMATES-Now We Talking Hardcore-EP

CISSIE SCURLOCK

MEANWHILE-all 3 LPs	INMATES-Now We Talking Hardcore-EP
SACRED SHOCK-For A Living-EP	DAYLIGHT ROBBERY-EP / AMÖBA-EP
LOS MONJO-Cobardes/La Peor Pesadilla-45	KNIFE IN THE LEG-EP / HERESY-EP
DOUBLE NEGATIVE-Raw Energy-EP	HOLY SHIT!/TURD HUNGRY CHRIST-split EP
PIERCED ARROWS-LP / XYX-EP	*CHAOS IN TEJAS*

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

AMÖBA-En Doende Varld-EP	EAT SKULL-LP & 7"
MEANWHILE-all 3 LPs	DOUBLE NEGATIVE-Raw Energy-EP
SACRED SHOCK-For A Living-EP	ANTI-YOU-Making Your Life Miserable-EP
LOS MONJO-Cobardes/La Peor Pesadilla-45	V/A-Sick of Fun-EP
HERESY-The Final Hour-EP	NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

Constant Struggle #2	*Mindless Mutant #4*
DOMD #4	*Mountain Landis Quarterly #1*
Dwelling Portably May 2008	*Pipe Bomb #39*
Inner Swine Vol. 14 #1	*Pictures*
Insipidly Idaho #1	*Scam – The Stencil Art of Argentina*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#153/Feb '96: Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Bean-flipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Sunspot Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Mauraders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality."

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, Al, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

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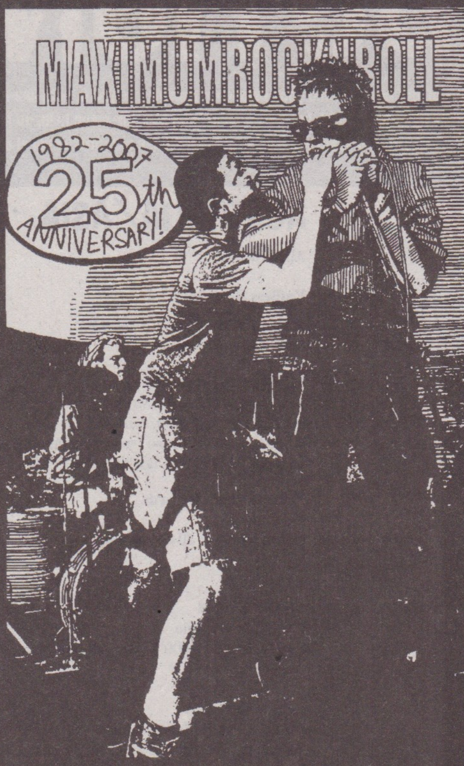

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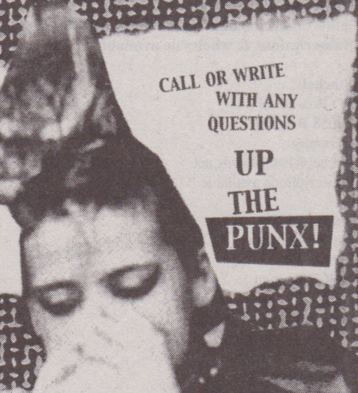

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LETTERS

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MRR—

Has *Maximum Rocknroll* lost its validity? The review of Aliens – *Head First* CD in the February 2008 issue is as inventive as it is *wrong*!

The reviewer "CK" (surely not Calvin Klein?) describes the actual music on the album in only one sentence. In this sentence she refers to Aliens use of "keyboards," which is interesting because Aliens do not use keyboards in their live shows. There are two additional "bonus" tracks tacked on at the end of the 13-song album. One of them, a Daniel Johnston cover called "Alien Mind Control" uses a keyboard track. This is because Daniel is predominantly a keyboardist and writes at a piano normally. Thus, Blake played an impromptu keyboard part similar to Daniel's for this track. There are *no* other keyboards used throughout the album, i.e. the first thirteen tracks (to be certain). This is a surprising assessment of a band with a guitarist and a drummer— no comments on the guitars or drums sounds? Or that it is just a two-piece getting an enormous sound?

The reviewer also states, "I would think a new band named Aliens in Austin, TX would be forbidden, especially in this day of the revival of Roky Erickson… the accidental crowds could be lucrative until word gets out."

Interesting "thoughts." Roky's band the Aliens had been defunct for years and appears on only two albums, I think. Roky currently plays with the band the Explosives. The Aliens were only a band with Roky, never playing a show without the star. Roky has had many bands as his backing musicians. Aliens have never pretended to be the Aliens or ever tried to deceive anyone.

This is purely the author's imagination on paper. In *fact*, one of Roky's guitarists from the Aliens is one of our biggest supporters in Austin. His name is Brian Salvador Curley, and he played in the Aliens with Roky and is a friend of Blake and Raanen i.e. Aliens. He currently plays in a resurrection of Austin punks, Sharon Tate's Baby, and still plays with the Delinquents who backed Lester Bangs. Aliens even had Sharon Tate's Baby play their album release party!

"This is indie rock with a rock edge," the review reads. Maybe is sounds like indie rock to the reviewer. Aliens MySpace says they are punk / rock / techno, the latter referring to their use of a drum machine. What is *punk* rock today anyway? Is Blink 182 really a *punk* band? Could Travis Barker even hold a conversation with John Lydon? What does "indie" mean anymore? There are tons of bands in Austin who are "indie," yet when you do the research they have management and their "indie" labels are actually connected to major label distribution— i.e. buck$. So are big money bands masquerading as "indie" valid *independent* artists?

Well if they would have bothered to contact, or even look at Aliens website, which the reviewer probably did not, they might have found that Blake Sandberg wrote, produced, played, and recorded the album. He also financed the recording and manufacturing, designed the layout, painted the cover, and assembled all artwork for both the CD and LP. He designs Aliens posters, buttons, stickers, shirts, and several ads to promote the band, some of which were even *in Maximum Rocknroll*. Not only that, Blake started his own label in the process called Misc. Music, based in Austin, Texas. He released a new album by Half Japanese founder, and legendary *independent* musician, Jad Fair, in January.

Here is where it gets really interesting: the reviewer claims that Aliens are "too commercial." You would have to ask the writer how this is even possible! Aliens play small shows in tiny Austin clubs. Blake does almost everything himself, as Raanen is still stuck doing homework! Raanen (drums) is only 18 and is in high school. Blake books shows, drives the van, makes the posters, writes the songs, sets rehearsals, goes to the post office, manages the websites, and does all the work of the band himself. *Plus* he runs Misc. Music doing similar work for other bands.

The band's most lucrative gig brought them less than $100. Very lucrative indeed! Aliens have sold about 30 copies of their album since November. With the expense/debt of recording, mixing, and mastering, the band will be in the red for a long time to come. They have an album, and it is great and full of DIY pride, sweat, passion, and guts. If you can't hear that then I think you aren't listening. The album does sound good—very much so, because people with skills, talent, and equipment heard something and volunteered their time and energy to help cut costs to make this album happen. Aliens do not have managers, labels, tycoons, rich families, or even roadies! They barely have any exposure to the public at all. So it is strange how someone can think they are commercial. They are the antithesis of commercial; Blake does not even go see movies in theaters *because* they are so commercialized. Aliens are not on an "indie" label because they do not trust anyone else with their music, their ideas, and image. They have a distinct personal vision and concept that is very different from much of the music released today. Aliens sing about commercialism all over their album, from the song "Moving Parts" to "Committed To Wind," to "Clammy," a song about not wanting to go outside into the current world we live in because it *is* so commercial and fake. Even the cover song "Alien Mind Control" is about trying not to lose your soul in this world.

It's strange but I don't think this reviewer *listened* to the words and I think Blake's lyrics might make some sense to this person if they really are so anti-commercial. Maybe they are into albums that look more do-it-yourself, or maybe they would have preferred one of Aliens old lo-fi cassette demo tapes instead? Is it Blake's fault he is talented and completely dedicated to this band?

Thanks,

—J. (a fan)

For Aliens

Dear J. (a fan) and Aliens—

Sorry, you didn't get the review you wanted from me in Maximum Rocknroll. *Unfortunately that is the risk you take when you send a CD into a magazine for review. A review is one person's opinion formed from listening to the CD. I don't have a personal relationship with Aliens so all I can go on is what I hear in their recordings. Contrary to your perception I did listen to the Aliens CD. After receiving this letter I even listened to it again and drew the same conclusions. Although I now understand that what I thought was a keyboard sound is actually a mixture of drum machine and guitar effects. I apologize for that. While I appreciate all of the band's DIY sensibilities with regarding to songwriting, label choice, management, CD production, and lack of movie theater presence I am only reviewing how the CD sounds.*

To me "indie rock" is a type of sound. It is generally a lo-fi guitar-based rock with dissonant chords, pop-sensibilities, and often-flat vocals. I said, "This is indie rock with a rock edge," and also, "the music is kind of heavy and yet pop," because the band could not easily be pigeonholed as simply indie rock. It has nothing to do with being on a fake major record label. Since it is MRR*'s policy to not review major label records or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros (it says it on the top of the page where Aliens review appeared), I assume a record getting assigned to me for review is an independent release.* MRR *readers do as well. As for me calling Aliens commercial, what I fully said was, "a bit too commercial-sounding for my taste." The CD is cleanly produced and the vocals are up-front in the mix, which is what some of the more commercial bands have a tendency to do. Since Blake Sandberg produced and recorded the record on his own, he should consider it a compliment. Most people do not have that ability to successfully record their own records and usually end up paying big money to get the sound they want. Nothing in that sentence implied that the band wants to sell out or anything to that extent. Again it was just a comment on the sound of the CD.*

When I first looked at the CD and saw the name Aliens and PO Box in Austin, TX I instantly wondered if it was the Roky Erickson band. I am sure other people would do the same. Of course, after looking at the CD credits I knew it wasn't. It is not as far-fetched as you seem to think. There are many bands that get back together without original and more famous

members. A few years ago The Magic Band reformed without Captain Beefheart, put out an album and toured. Why couldn't the Aliens do it without Roky? I am glad Brian Salvador Curley doesn't have a problem with the band using the name Aliens. I still think it's kind of silly. Also that was a joke (albeit a lame one) about "the accidental crowds being lucrative". I am obviously not a comedian.

I have been a reviewer for MRR *for 17 years. At an average of five records per month that would be approximately 1020 reviews I have written for this magazine. In that time I have only received two letters disagreeing with my review. That is an average of 99.804% accurate reviews. With those numbers, I have to conclude that my review of Aliens CD is probably correct too.*

Thanks for writing,

—Carolyn Keddy (CK)

Readers, writers, etc. of MRR—

Even though the review of *Big Whoop* #1 was not good, I'd like to let everyone know that it is no longer $4. I've found cheaper printing methods so now *Big Whoop* is donation-based. All you really have to send me is postage ($1.14 continental US, not sure elsewhere but we'll figure it out). You can also trade me your zine, which I prefer. As for the show house listing, I don't care if the house has a MySpace or not but it saves me space to print their URL, and also they usually list upcoming shows on said sites. If you run a show house *anywhere*, I'll be happy to include it on my list.

Thanks and take it sleazy,

—Joe the 'stache

Hey MRR—

"Ever get the feeling you've been cheated"? Great fitting final words from Johnny Rotten at the Winterland show in 1978. Well I felt very cheated out of reading the article on the legacy of the Sex Pistols and the whole Winterland thing, but I read the April 2008 issue cover to cover and could not find any fuckin' evidence of said article. Have I missed it? I mean it must be invisible or was this an April Fool's joke on the people who think the Sex Pistols and British punk mean something in the history of punk rock? Too many people slag the Pistols off as a fuckin' joke—like their not very important. The band deserves some sort of respect from independent punk zines. It would be cool if you did an article on 1977 punk and its impact. Yeah, I know you want people to contribute such articles but I'm sure there are many people on staff that could handle it better. I'd like to see more good pics of Eater who were the youngest English punk band to put out records and play gigs. There's so much emphasis placed on the first band to put out the earliest punk LP. The Damned claims that title, but some say the Sex Pistols. Who fuckin' cares? Punk was and still is a way for bands to be heard, to have fun, and get a message across. It's not a way of selling out your legacy for big bucks and having your music put in beer and car commercials… something punk was against. I guess things change and nobody has the old school attitude anymore. Punk's not dead but selling out could damage its credibility. There are still some punks that feel this way, I'm sure. Just think for yourselves and fuck the assholes that grind you down. Thanks for letting me share my thoughts.

—Paul Abuse

Hey Paul—

Sorry you missed the Sex Pistols article. I guess we should've let people know that you need special glasses to read it. I agree that it's important to cover punk's past and that car commercials are much cooler when they have punk songs in them. MRR, *however, will continue it's focus on relevant and underexposed DIY punk/hardcore, which means your beloved Eater will not be getting much attention in these pages any time soon.*

—Cissie

To Whom It May Concern—

I read *MRR* on a month-to-month basis. I can't say that I read it cover-to-cover, but I do read a good 60-to-70 percent of it. I enjoy *MRR*, but some things are starting to bother me. Occasionally, I come across the word "fag." It doesn't matter the context in which it is written or what the writer "actually meant," it still makes me cringe. I thought we were past this. The word "fag" is even beginning to pop up less in the mainstream world so one would assume that within our tight knit punk community it would be completely unheard of and unacceptable. In issue #299 I read about "art fags" in at least three different places. This means that not only did the writer think that this term was appropriate to use, but the editor saw nothing wrong with it as well. I just wanted to bring attention to this and remind everyone that *we don't need it*!

—Jessi Hughey

MRR—

I wanted to say thanks for reviewing the Strange Factory – *Circle World* CD!! I just wanted to add that the CD is available in the US and not only from I Disease in Fukushima, Japan. Hardcore Holocaust, Despotic Records, Velted Regnub, Ebullition etc. all have limited copies. Orders come with a free poster/flyer not available in Japan. Copies can also be ordered directly from Adam Drake / 3429 15th Ave South / Seattle, WA 98144. The CD is $12 ppd and I accept money orders and PayPal. These were imported from Japan! Keep up the good work at showcasing that punk is happening everywhere and that it is still relevant, political, and fucking fun! Contact Strange Factory at www.myspace.com/strangefactory, and for US, World, and bulk orders, please contact warsablackhole@hotmail.com. Cheers!

—Adam

Dear MRR—

Hi! I'm writing this letter as somebody who knows both Yoichi (from Snuffy Smiles Records in Japan), and the people in Off With Their Heads (who went to Japan, had a bad time, and then said some shit about it in that recent interview of theirs in *MRR*). I'm not interested in starting a typically crappy *MRR* letters section feud, entertaining as that shit can be (none of the people involved are straight-edge or hippies, so it wouldn't be that funny). I'm just writing because I feel that Ryan from Off With Their Heads said some pretty nasty things about Yoichi and I don't want people who've never met Yoichi to judge him based only on Ryan's (and anyone else's) bad experience. When my old band (the Modern Machines) went to Japan, we had a blast. When the Chinese Telephones went to Japan, they had a blast. When all those guys from San Diego went to Japan (more than once in some cases), they had a blast. The list goes on and on. Also, Yoichi might be a crotchety old punk, but he's not clique-y, or a dickhead, and he definitely isn't sexist! When the Modern Machines were there, we did most of our touring in a tiny van with the Because—their bassist, Yuka, is a female to be sure. We spent hours and hours of time around Yoichi and Yuka, and we met many other women over there. So unless Off With Their Heads bring out the clique-y, dickhead, sexist nature in people who've never demonstrated that kind of behavior before, I would chalk Ryan's judgement of Yoichi's character up to a severe personality clash and plain old incompatibility in close quarters, the likes of which has happened before on tours all over the world with a billion bands and band members, and will happen a billion more times in the future. Yoichi's got my support, as I'm sure he also has the support of 99% of the people he's ever booked tours for in Japan. One more time: Off With Their Heads didn't have the greatest time over in Japan on a tour Yoichi booked, but that doesn't mean the things Ryan said are true. Don't judge either side until you've talked to both. That's all I'm saying. And that'll do it for now.

—Nato Coles

P.S. Mantooth's column in *MRR* #301 is right on (and hilarious)! That *Razorcake* column about Ron Paul was disgusting. It read like a propaganda piece straight out of a political campaign. Only thing is, he kinda made it seem like Rev. Norb wrote it. He did not. Rev. Norb does not need to be in any more trouble with *MRR*!

Hi MRR!—

Congrats on the recent 300th issue and respect is due! I'm writing a quick mail just to make a suggestion about the zine reviews section. As a zine writer myself I'm a regular reader of it and am always interested in seeing other zines to make possible trades with. However without including an electronic contact (email) in reviews making initial contact with a zine can be awkward, time-consuming and impractical. Not that there's any problems with letter writing, but you must remember that reviews in *MRR* in my experience come out approx three months after the zine has been sent in for review; ample time for the zine writer to move house, go traveling or sell out all copies of their zine. So including an email contact or some other electronic contact would be a lot better for doing trades. Otherwise its a case of the old: either send your zine to the zine you want (having already paid for printing costs, postage), hope that it arrives at a still functioning address, that the zine writer will agree to the trade and then reply. Or send out an initial letter asking the zine writer if they're interested in doing a trade, wait for a reply if one comes, post a zine, wait for the trade. I'm sure you get my point. So how about including an electronic contact as a matter of course with zine reviews?

—Anto, *Losedom* zine

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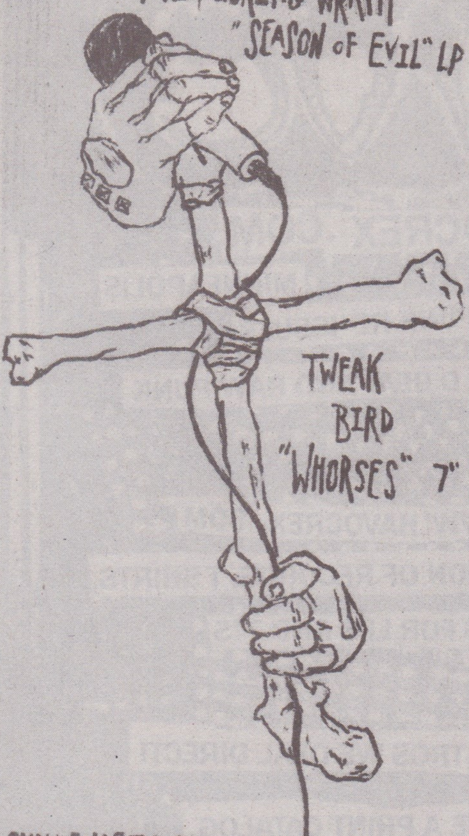

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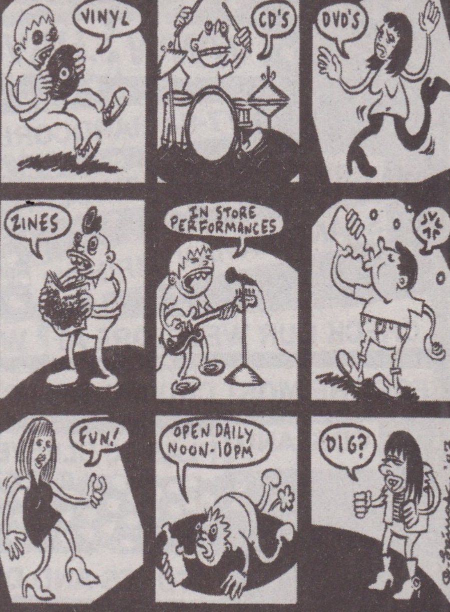

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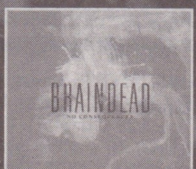

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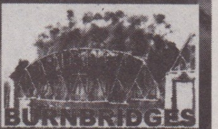

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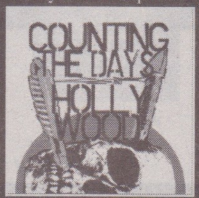

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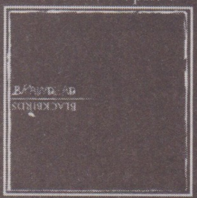

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COLUMNS

Sunday, April 19, 2008. San Francisco International Airport.

We're at the airport. Robert's big white van is pulled over in the "departures" lane. Dick, Trotsky, Bruce and Phil have reservations on a 4:30pm flight to the UK. By tomorrow morning, I will be walking under familiar trees in the Panhandle, feeling a cool Pacific breeze and they will be thousands of miles away, on the other side of the American continent and the Atlantic Ocean, having supper and English tea.

Just like that. We fly away.

It is an odd feeling, going from three weeks on the road, six and sometimes seven of us in the van together, to walking alone through the park. More than that, I miss him. I find refuge in a café on Divisadero, one that isn't full of hipsters. A few people sit at wooden tables. The coffee is hot and strong, and I let it sit and cool a bit, looking out the window. I think about the last few weeks, take mental pictures, and scribble down tales from the road.

The outline: SUBHUMANS (UK) West Coast tour, from Seattle to Tempe. Walking in my tall black boots, my hair grown out into a tangle of red curls, my heart hanging on my sleeve. I smile and gallop through the days. Here are a few moments that come to mind.

Tuesday, April 1. San Francisco, CA

I flew out to San Francisco a few days before the band arrived. I did errands during the day, and spent my nights hanging out with Bryce and sleeping on her couch, finding dark bars and drinking whiskey. It was good to be back in the city again, to see the bustle of people on the streets. I had enjoyed my retreat into the countryside, but being with friends and walking around the Mission, I welcomed the familiar excitement and culture of the urban sphere.

The band was flying from England, and Robert was driving directly from Milwaukee. Robert had left home three days ago, and had planned on arriving in SF by Monday, but on Tuesday, he was still on the road.

As with the last SUBHUMANS US tour, his trip began with storms. Instead of a flood in Chicago this time, Robert was caught by snow in Colorado. A major highway was closed due to the storm, and he had to slowly make his way on a side road during the night, the snow coming down in rafters and the road full of ice. Another road was blocked because there had been a forty-odd car pile up on the interstate. My gawd!

It was such a relief to hear on Tuesday morning that Robert had cleared the mountains and the snow without incident. He slept for about two hours in the van and then drove through the rest of the night, and was now only a few hours away from the Bay. He called to say he would be able to meet us at the airport. I was once again, amazed.

At international arrivals I met the band, four punks who tumbled out of customs with all their bags and guitars pushing airport carts, an eight-hour time change and a ten-hour flight in their heads. I had a huge smile when I caught the sparkle in Phil's eyes, walking down the hallway towards me. Hello is the antithesis to goodbye, and I relished in the moment, electricity in the air between us.

The only sensible thing to do was to find an airport bar, drink beers and catch up while we waited. A tired Robert soon arrived, we piled in the van, and tour began!

Friday, April 4. Hawthorn Theater, Portland

The last two days had gone by in a blur; good shows and getting back into the swing of tour. Today we woke up at Jensen's in Seattle, and were in Portland by this afternoon. In Seattle I saw John from Zoro for a minute, and I really enjoyed Hell's Kitchen in Tacoma. The staff let us stay after everyone was gone, eating veggie burgers and greasy fries, finishing our beers as the bartender packed up for the night.

In Portland, we were greeted by one of my favorite skylines, a matrix of bridges spanning a river surrounded by hills, and at the center modern buildings and old brick. There is a sense of history and renewal, the old mixed with the new.

The Hawthorn was a fairly big place, a large hall with a big stage at one end, and the room divided into two sections. The front section was all-ages, and the back section had a bar and was 21+, a low wall separating the two sections. I saw this quite often on tour, and it always seems so ridiculous, making about as much sense, and nearly as effective, as the Prohibition.

The doors opened, and the place quickly filled up with some 500 people. I like the energy of big shows, but I can also feel overwhelmed. There was hardly any room to move. Even before the first band started, I saw several wasted punks, lots of spikes, leather jackets and mohawks. Just for fun I started taking photos of SUBHUMANS tattoos and patches, homemade shirts and the carefully decorated jackets. (There is nothing more fun than being a tourist in your own backyard.)

I also liked the punk parents who kept asking, "Do you have something in kid size?" and who gave their kids a few dollars to pick out stickers and patches. At a time when *MRR* has just celebrated its 300th issue (congrats!!) punk has become multi-generational. Punks who saw their first shows in the '70s or '80s are now parents, and their kids are often going to shows. Jessica described it well in her column, how "all-ages" is really becoming just that, a range of ages, and that's interesting. What will happen to punk as more of us stick around for the long term?

The first band of the night, ETHER CIRCUS, played a type of ska-punk that reminded me of WORLD INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY with a keyboard player. Good stuff.

This was my first time seeing CRIMINAL DAMAGE, who was going to play with the SUBHUMANS for the next two weeks. I had heard their records, and was excited to see them live in their hometown.

The band got on stage, and the singer and guitarist Paul had bandages on his face. He said something like; "I just want to say, fuck that guy who jumped me from behind in the hallway for no reason. I don't know who he is." And then they launched into their first song. They sounded great. Paul sang with gruff vocals in a deep voice, but clear enough to hear the lyrics. Mid-tempo, classic riffs with choruses that stay in my head for days,

"Life is so much better without all the pain."

The punks were dancing, a big circle pit, and after CRIMINAL DAMAGE the whole place seemed even more packed. The merch table where I was standing kept getting pushed further back towards the wall as the people in front of me couldn't help but be part of the crush of the crowd. During all this, one of the more unfriendly bouncers looked at me, and kept pointing under the table. It was so loud I couldn't hear anything. What the hell did he want? I looked under the merch table where he was pointing, and besides the t-shirt boxes there was a young punk girl on the floor. She looked comfortable, probably drunk, passed out or sleeping.

"Does she belong to you?"

"No," I shrugged. "She's not part of the merch supplies."

He came over and woke her up, and she stumbled back into the crowd, she seemed OK. Maybe better from the nap.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE rocked through their set, and at one point Paul's head started spitting blood through his bandage, leaving a red trail on his white t-shirt. Everything was a bit chaos, and I kept seeing small fights break out, wasted punks being carried out by their friends. A woman probably in her mid-twenties wearing a *Day the Country Died* t-shirt came and stood by me behind the table, which provided a small space next to the wall. She was very pregnant and didn't want to get hurt by the crowd. Understandable! I was feeling more claustrophobic, literally being boxed in. But there was nothing to do but just enjoy it, and try to keep the wasted punks from spilling over the table as best I could.

The SUBHUMANS went on next, the band was into their tour stride and everything sounded great in the hall. The punks danced, stage dived, and the pregnant punk and I sang along.

The show ended, and there was the usual rush of selling things and packing up, having a couple of drinks at the bar before we had to get in the van again.

A very nice gothic punk with big platform boots and jet-black hair invited us to stay at her house. On the way there, she started off about how she hates Phil Collins, in great detail, and demonstrated her acting skills of talking in a fake English accent. Bruce balanced water bottles on things, such as on Trotsky's head, on the benches and on people's toes. Phil went to sleep, passed out with the fuzzy lion blanket around him, and Dick soon joined him, passed out on the other side of the bench, blanket on both of them. Very cute. Soon, Bruce and I were the only ones left awake in the back of the van, wondering where all the beer and liquor had gone.

Sunday, April 6. San Francisco, CA.

We arrived at Slim's early, even after our long drive from Oregon.

The show last night in Bend had been good, and I was able to talk more with the CRIMINAL DAMAGE crew. I found out that both Paul and Parker, their friend who was driving them and doing most of the merch, are both from Tennessee. Paul and I even went to some of the same shows at the Pantheon in Nashville in about 1990-91 when I first got into punk. Cool! In my travels I meet very few Tennessee punks, and here we were meeting together on a West Coast tour. To top off the night, a girl offered me moonshine, and I happily accepted a shot of the clear burning liquid, drinking together in the ladies room.

The first thing we did when we drove into SF was to head directly to Azteca on Market Street, for some of the best burritos in town. The burritos there are massive heavy things wrapped in aluminum foil, full of spicy tofu, refried black beans, guacamole, salsa and lettuce. It was delicious, and by the time I ate half of it I was stuffed.

At Slim's we loaded in, and the band sound checked and I set up the merch stall. We all relaxed a bit, and Trotsky poured us a round of Jack and Cokes before the doors opened, a nice way to start the evening.

CONQUEST FOR DEATH played first. The whole band is full of energy, each member totally rocking out, matching the power of the heavy music. It was great seeing Robert on stage, hair and beard flying, and their singer Devon jumping in the air doing hardcore-style kicks. Their lead guitarist was amazing, a total blaze of metal punk mayhem.

Lots of friends showed up–Ramsey, Kate, Pete the Roadie (who is from England and traveled everywhere with the Subs for years, and now lives in Oakland), Kamala, Richard (who also drove bands across the country for years), Amy, Floyd, Ken and Denise from Prank, Will from Born/Dead, and it was great to see so many of the Bay area gang all in one place. I sipped my beer and felt good, slinging t-shirts and talking with the punks.

The Subs set was fun, and I danced behind the stall as I had a great view of the stage. The crowd wasn't as crazy as the previous nights, but to me it just seemed like a different type of energy. It wasn't as wasted as Portland, probably due to the bag search to get in the door and the "no re-entry" for those under 21. The club also had a strict, "no stagediving" policy with bouncers to back it up. It brings up the complicated issue of how clubs can suck for punk shows, and the problem of where bands that draw a large number of people can play. The DIY network in the states does a great job of supporting smaller bands, with the best shows being in basements, living rooms, small bars and such. It's harder getting a larger space together and keeping it going, but places like the community church in Philly are good examples that it is possible.

It was a good night, and after we closed the bar we ended with going back to Kate's place in Oakland. A big "thank you" to her for being such an excellent host, who has taken care of bands on the road for over a decade now. Without people like her and everyone else who puts up traveling bands on their floors, couches, porches and where ever there is an extra place to sleep, punk tours wouldn't be possible.

When we arrived, Kate had her apartment ready with mattresses and couches for everyone, even clean sheets and pillows. What luxury! As I closed my eyes and snuggled under the blankets on a comfortable futon, I could hear the voices of the party winding down in the next room. Phil's warm arms were around me, he kissed me goodnight, and it was the perfect end to a long day on the road.

Tuesday, April 8. Sacramento, CA

Reno the night before was notable for my hangover from SF and the drive through the desert during the day. CONQUEST FOR DEATH played again at the show at Club Underground, once again a blast of energy and powerful guitar.

The Reno show was in a large place that was built like a warehouse, full with punks, and smoking allowed inside, which felt gross, but in a weird way it made me want to smoke again. I ended up getting a smoke from a punk who was probably sixteen, and mumbled under my breath, "cigarettes are made by corporations killing the masses," while asking for a light. Argh.

The crowd was excited for the Subs, and there was a huge circle pit about the size of a roller-skating ring, lots of people crowd surfing, going nuts.

At the stall, an old man kept coming by with a handful of dollar bills, and asking me to count it for him. He then would buy what he could with the money, a CD or t-shirt or a bunch of stickers. He did this about four or five times, bringing a pile of singles, putting it on the table and asking me to count it, then buying something else. Odd. But then Reno is a bit of an odd town, with all the casinos and all, out in the desert. Maybe he thought he was playing the lottery.

The Sacramento show on Tuesday was set up only a week or two in advance, as originally it was going to be a day off. Luckily, some Pyrate Punx got involved, and a show was on.

We arrived and the show was in a small bar, hardly able to fit about a fifty people standing, but I'm guessing there were probably more like a hundred. The merch table was set up in the porch room outside, so I could

only stick my head in for a few songs. And that's all the room there was left, just for my head! It was beyond packed, but everyone seemed to be on the same level, it wasn't overwhelming and the vibe was positive. About half the punks there had a Pyrate Punx patch on, way to represent!

CRIMINAL DAMAGE were great, they really rocked out in the more familiar surroundings of the crowd being close, not being separated by a "crowd barrier" or a high club stage. The opening bands were all good too, although I don't have their names. The first band was made up of members who were about fifteen, and they were all tight and together, reminding me a bit of Minor Threat in some of their songs.

The Subs were full of energy and right on, it was so great to see them in a small place, totally DIY. The energy and music of the place overflowed out the doors and everyone was into it. Dick's explanations of their songs were spot on, and the mixture of thoughtful lyrics and powerful tunes are what I like most about the band.

Thursday, April 10. Santa Cruz, CA.

The Veteran's Hall in Santa Cruz was definitely one of my favorite shows. The hall was a good size for the crowd of some three or four hundred punks, as the ceilings were tall, with vintage lights and decorations around the edges, keeping the place cool and airy. The stage was about four feet tall. Not enormous, but just high enough you could see the band from the back of the room. The merch stall was busy and the show went by in a blur. With my caffeine high I folded t-shirts, cut patches and danced to all of the bands.

LA PLEBE from the Bay was excellent. It was great seeing them again, as last time I saw them they rocked the house at Gilman Street. They play ska-punk and have two amazing horn players who really notch-up the energy of the band and the crowd. They have lyrics about social-justice issues and sing most of their songs in Spanish. They finished with a cover of "Dirty Old Town" by the Pogues, definitely giving the song its proper due, a fun ending to a great set.

When the Subs got on stage there was a roar from the crowd, and they launched right into "Apathy." Kids were stagediving and singing along, and I could see Robert trying to keep Bruce's cords and guitar peddles out of harm's way. Sturgeon from LEFTOVER CRACK got on stage and sang along for a song, and made sure someone claimed a pair of shoes that had been lost in the pit. The Subs ended with "Religious Wars" and it was the cap to a great show.

I slung t-shirts to the leaving crowd, and finally everyone was gone and the hall was clear again. No matter how great the show is there is always that nice moment when it is finally done, the boxes are all packed up, the gear is loaded in the van and I can go outside, and breathe.

In the parking lot, the band was drinking in the van, there was a cooler with beer and ice, and it was definitely more fun than a bar. Lots of friends, the other bands, punks and drunks hanging out outside, everyone in a good mood and the energy high. I rode Danny's cool cruiser around the parking lot, and then so did Phil, and then he crashed! It was a big spill, I ran towards him thinking his head must be bashed in on the pavement, but he jumped up in an instant saying, "I'm OK!"

Before we could get into any more trouble, we all took off with Danny to his friends' house—a big wooden punk house on the top of a hill on the outskirts of town. CRIMINAL DAMAGE and the Subs both spent the night there, so we filled the living room with sleeping bags and sleeping bodies.

Before we crashed out tho', Robert, Danny and their friends started a fire in the brick-lined fire pit behind the house. Soon we were all gathered around a blazing fire, beers in hands, the warmth of the burning logs keeping away a cold night. The good mood and buzz from the show carried over, and we all sat around talking for hours, occasionally someone venturing into the dark woods looking for another log to add to the fire. The stars were out, and the smoke trailed into the night sky. This is the best thing about traveling for me, enjoying the moment and the company.

Friday, April 11. Palmdale, CA

We drove through hills during the day, and stopped by the side of the road to take in the dramatic view. Hills and purple flowers, leaves bright green from spring. We then passed through long stretches of farmland, miles and miles of orange groves, almond trees, and endless rows of grapes. It was strange looking at the landscape; everywhere complete monocultures, without even grass between the orange trees. Nothing except the product was allowed to grow. On the ground, there was only dirt.

I fell asleep towards the end of the afternoon, and woke up in the van just as we arrived in Palmdale. The show seemed in the middle of nowhere, no other buildings around. There was only a building at the end of a road with a plastic banner on the side that said "HALL FOR RENT." As we pulled up in the van, there was already a long line of punks waiting to get in. The sun was setting, and it seemed as if punks were coming in from the surrounding fields, punks magically appearing out of the ground. "If you build it they will come."

The hall was small; a low ceiling with a vinyl floor, no stage, and only a drum riser and a PA. There was another small room with a bar (that was closed), and the whole place was like a budget-rate Elk's Lodge. With all of the excitement and punks outside, and the tiny size of the space, I already knew it was going to be a mental show.

We loaded in, and I set up the merch on a table in the bar room. ANIMA MUNDI and their friends were sitting at the table next to me, and were very friendly and welcoming.

The vibe of the show felt very country (and that's not a bad thing) and polite, the punks seemed open and had a good attitude. The doors opened, and the place was quickly packed. ANIMA MUNDI's set was dark anarcho-punk, with dramatic drums and lyrical repetitions that definitely paid tribute to Crass with male and female vocals. They were definitely pissed off at the state of the world, had thought deeply about issues, and their music reflected their ideas and passion. Right-on in all regards.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE arrived in the parking lot just as Anima Mundi was playing their last song. Perfect timing! The Crim Dams had taken the scenic route from Santa Cruz, and were still on time, until they got lost in Palmdale. They quickly loaded in, played a great set, the room transforming into one big circle pit.

The Subs went on, and the entire place was filled, probably some 400 punks in the hall. Their set was a total riot. Phil and Dick stood on the drum riser as everything kept getting knocked over. Punks helped hold up the guitar amps and the PA speakers, and Robert was a human shield keeping punks away (best he could) from Bruce's guitar peddles. One punk even stage dived off Robert's back! It was wild.

The show ended, we packed up, and it was great to feel the fresh air outside. Everyone was in a good mood, a totally crazy show. We finally said our goodbyes to everyone and got in the van, and headed to Mike's house near L.A.

When we arrived, Trotsky and I smiled and did a dance in the kitchen. "We're here! We're here!"

It is always great seeing Mike and Daniela, it feels like we're on vacation. Comfortable sleeping places for everyone in his house, a clean shower, and a shaded porch where we can hang out and watch the smog roll in. Even though it was nearly the next day when we arrived, we all took a drink and sat on the patio, catching up with Mike for a bit, enjoying the cool night air, before finally crashing into bed.

Tuesday, April 15.

In the loft, the high desert winds shake the van, and we sway like a sailboat in rough seas, crossing the hot asphalt of the interstate, headed west. Last night Las Vegas, tonight L.A. Already, tour is nearly over. Only a few more shows left, and then they fly home. The

days gain speed, and I try to pin them down to paper while crossing through the desert heat, too hot to sleep.

Both the Saturday and Sunday shows were at the Showcase Theater in Corona, CA. It's too bad this club is closing its doors soon, as the place was nearly perfect for punk shows. The stage was in one corner of the room, like it is at Gilman, so more people could be up front, and it was easy to see the band wherever you stood. The Showcase isn't a big place, but some 600 punks packed in for the first night. It was a bit over the top.

It was the one show where I felt really trapped, just too many people, not feeling good. I wanted air and space to breathe and to be somewhere else, a bit of a burn out after eleven shows straight. I was also just tired, and PMS and cramps were kicking at my insides. The stall was swarmed by punks, some friendly and interesting and some drunk and obnoxious, and I slung a million t-shirts by the end of the night. But despite my bad mood the show was awesome, and all of the bands were really good. I enjoyed INTRO5PECT's style of punk with dance beats and a keyboard player, creating a unique and dynamic effect. It was CRIMINAL DAMAGE's last night on tour with the Subs, and they had a great set. I love those catchy choruses! Great people too, and it was really fun traveling with them.

On Sunday, the show was a bit more relaxed, and I felt better after a good night's sleep. ANIMA MUNDI played again and they sounded even stronger and more pissed off. It was my first time seeing RESISTANT CULTURE, and they were excellent, a blend of grind/crust with male and female vocals, with lyrics about indigenous rights, the environment and other critical subjects.

Thursday, April 17. Mohave Desert.

In the van on our way to Tucson. The desert is full of tall cacti, and desert bushes with small yellow flowers. Mountains rise solid and blue on the horizon. The afternoon speeds by just as fast as the miles.

I have left my jacket in the middle of nowhere. How did that happen?

Let me catch the tale of yesterday.

Wednesday, April 16. San Diego.

We arrived outside the massive SOMA, part of which was originally a movie theatre, in the afternoon. This place is a bit weird, as there is nothing small or DIY about it. It is a huge venue, and punk shows here attract sometimes over a thousand people. Everything is done by contract and to the letter. But this was my second time being here, and I knew a bit more of what to expect.

I set up the merch stall in the area that used to sell popcorn and soda, and met Mario who was selling BUMBKLAATT's t-shirts and music. I missed almost all of the show (as I was in the lobby) but got to talk to the punks. There were lots of mall-type punks, who looked straight out of Hot Topic, but also older punks who had seen the Subs in the '80s. There were more punk parents, and even whole families out for the show. There were crusty looking punks full of patches and dirty hair, and kids who looked like it was their first punk show ever. It was, without a doubt, a mix.

One young punk, maybe fourteen or so, picked up the Citizen Fish/Leftover Crack LP and said, "Is this a calendar?"

"No, that's a *record*. You play it on a *record player*," I said, surprised. Of all the odd questions I've been asked, no one has ever asked me what a record was before.

"Oh," the punk said, and put it down.

But then again, maybe it's not so strange, just a sign of the times. I saw my first records in my parent's music collection. They had the Beatles (which I loved), and a bunch of hippy stuff from the '60s, and rock from the '70s, and albums of Christmas carols. The first records that were "mine" at age six included the soundtrack to *Mary Poppins* and *Songs for Kids* like the "Hokey Pokey." Who buys records for kids anymore? Who buys records except for punks and the underground scene? So, here we go, the first generation to grow up without records being common around the house.

Another sign of the times was a group of punks who came up to the stall and showed me a video on their cell phone. The video was taken about ten minutes ago in the parking lot. The image, they happily explained, was one of their friends in a fight. "Yeah, she really got the shit beaten out of her!" they said.

Totally surreal. On the small screen I could see two girls fighting on the street, one girl getting her hair pulled, being kicked and dragged on the ground. It looked intense.

'"This is *you*?" I asked the girl standing in front of me. She looked OK, maybe a little drunk, her hair a bit shaggy, probably from being almost pulled out of her head.

"Yeah, I'm fine," she replied.

Fucked up. Who watches their friend get beaten up, and meanwhile takes a video of it? I didn't know what to say.

Anyway, enough standing around talking shit, back to the show!

Mario watched the Subs stall for a minute, and I snuck around the corner to catch part of their set. They were playing in the "small" room, with some five or six hundred punks there. The sound was fucking amazing and the band was dead on. They played one of their best sets of tour, and it totally rocked, mammoth venue and all.

At the end of the show, we said goodbye to RESISTANT CULTURE and INTRO5PECT who also played, and finally drove off into the night, headed towards Arizona and Tempe tomorrow.

We had a small "bar in a plastic bag" which included half a bottle of liquor, a couple of cans of soda and a few plastic cups. Trotsky, Bruce, Phil and I sat in the back having a couple of drinks, everything feeling good, talking and laughing, Robert driving and playing tunes on the stereo. In the end he put on Pink Floyd, and it was the perfect soundtrack to traveling through the desert landscape at night. The moon was just full enough to reflect off the sand, everything in motion and fluid, the horizon dark and endless as the van skipped through the miles.

A couple of hours later I woke up and we were at a cheap motel in Yuma.

We piled out, flopped onto beds, and took off again in the morning. I wonder what the maids thought in the afternoon, finding my jacket somewhere probably under the bed, with its spikes and patches, and a backpatch of a lovely vulva?

Saturday, April 19.

The show last night at the Clubhouse in Tempe was fun and full of energy, the crowd filling the stage, a great ending to tour.

By the next afternoon the wind was howling and we were in the California hills. We were off the map. Somewhere in the countryside—lost after highway 55 was closed due to an accident and the detour led us nowhere. It is beautiful and windy; cold as the sun is setting. The road drops off into a cliff as we wind around the hills, looking for someone to ask directions, how to find the interstate again, looking for our way back home.

May 5, 2008. Tennessee.

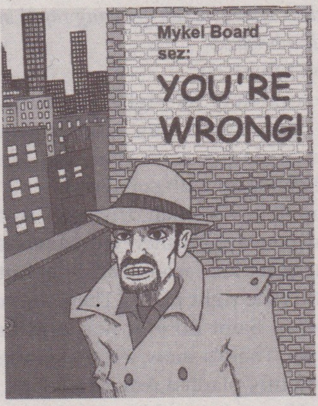
My gawd, another rambling column about tour. Unless I want to write a book, or learn how to synthesize, I had to leave out tales of Tacoma, Fresno, Las Vegas, Tucson, Tempe and L.A. It's just too much. A girl has to stop typing and get on her bike at some point ya' know. We did find our way back to the interstate eventually, and yes, we really were off the map.

I want to add that seeing NAKED AGGRESSION in L.A. was amazing. They played perhaps the best I've ever seen them, and I caught them in the early '90s at the Rat. The lineup has changed over the years, but Kirsten is still going strong and her vocals are better than ever. They inspired me back then, and they still do.

Thanks to Robert for keeping us all together, and doing the hundred things he does every day that makes tour as fun as it is, and keeps everything on track. Also thanks again to our hosts who put us up and made us welcome, especially Bryce in S.F., Jensen in Seattle, Mike and Daniela in L.A. and Kate in Oakland. It was great having Kamala along

for a few days, Daniela with us in the wilds of Las Vegas, and seeing so many friends along the way. I really enjoyed meeting the CRIMINAL DAMAGE gang, and thanks as always to Dick, Trotsky, Bruce and especially Phil for all the good times. I miss you!

I'm back in Tennessee for a few weeks, and then on the road again. More tales next month. Solidarity and blazing guitars, Erika (e_bitchcrew@yahoo.com)



"Without question, the greatest invention in the history of mankind is beer. Oh, I grant you that the wheel was also a fine invention, but the wheel does not go nearly as well with pizza."—Dave Barry

When I was younger, I used to use my index finger. Maybe we all do. I see little babies, index fingers plugged knuckle-deep into a tiny nostril, fishing out a morsel. From nose to mouth. Dessert. A snack.

About 30 years ago, I switched. I discovered my thumb. Maybe it's a Jew thing. We've got more room. Can push that thumb right in there. Much more satisfying. I do that now, scouring the inside, the part away from the cartridge. Supporting the skin with my forefinger against the outside, hooking what's left of big-city soot, nose-haired filtered out of my lungs, now under the nail, scraping it downward. Out, examining it. Hard, part-black, part translucent, like a gallon milk jug.

Re-insert.

I pick at the exquisite scab in the V where the nostril attaches to the rest of my face. I rip at it. A beautiful pain, like a tongue pressing a sore tooth. I tear the scab from inside my nose. This time my nail is black, and red with fresh blood. A real chunk, built up through a day of slow bloody leakage. My reward for breathing the frozen New Hampshire air.

I'm here on a short trip to Fredericton, New Brunswick. Not in New Jersey. In Canada. Where nobody goes. Where I just happened to see on a map when I'm showing my students New England. Where I decide to drive, and stop along the way. Libraries to write. Micro-breweries to beer.

Right now, I'm in Quiznos in Manchester NH, trying to contact Jason. I have 40 minutes before they close. Soon, I'll be out in the cold. Manchester is *very* cold.

Jason's my couch-surfing host for the day. I called a couple times on the way from Boston, but just got voicemail.

Now there's some kind of electronic tornado. The vortex of the e-storm is Quiznos in Manchester, New Hampshire. Telecommunications is nigh-on impossible. Maybe it's terrorists. Sssssshhhhhaaaaaahhhhhhhhhrrrrr. Ssssshhhhhaaaaaahhhhhhhhhrrrrr. All cellphone communication blocked. I walk outside Quiznos to try again. I pushed the "Jason" button.

"Sssssshhhhhaaaaaahhhhhhhhhrrrrr. Ssssshhhhhaaaaaahhhhhhhhhrrrrr. Hello youSssssshhhhhaaaaaahhhhhhhhhrrrrr. ...nally."

"Hello Jason? It's Mykel. I don't know if you can hear me. But I'm in town at Quiznos on Elm Street. They're going to close soon. You know where Quiznos is?"

"Sssssshhhhhaaaaaahhhhhhhhhrrrrr, I do," he says. "I'll see ySssssshhhhhaaaaaahhhhhhhhhrrrrr."

"Yeah," I say. "See you."

Then I return to type these words. During the next 20 minutes, three people enter the sandwich store. One is a very street-looking kid: big, black, in baggy jeans, baseball hat with a perfectly flat brim tilted up and slightly to the right. Something about the guy isn't authentic. Like he's a dean's list student from the local university, trying to look ghetto. I don't know what it is. His lack of swagger. Some deep intelligence that shows through his walk. The way he doesn't swing his shoulders. I donno.

As I puzzle this out, two blond really dumb-looking white girls walk in, almost as if choreographed. *They* are authentic. Simultaneously, the two of them shift their weight. One skinny leg at a time. Step. Swing hip. Step. Swing hip. Step. Swing hip. Like sex soldiers, marching in tandem with puffed out chests.

Both chew gum. Both wear skirts much too short for the freezing weather. (Did I mention there's snow on the ground? And it's colder than a witch's twat... and twice as windy.)

"What can I get you?" asks the vaguely Hispanic girl behind the counter.

"We'd like an application," says the girl with the higher hair. "We want to work here."

The Hispanic worker looks pleadingly at her boss. He's also behind the counter, a mop in his hands. He shakes his head.

"I'm sorry," says the counter-worker. "We're not hiring at the moment."

"That's okay," says the other girl. They shrug in tandem and walk out of the store.

Passing them on his way in, is a guy wearing jeans, a pink shirt, a maroon tie, with the best chin since Ai... the Drink Club goddess. I don't know what it is, but there's something about chins. Everyone I know with a really strong chin has a really strong personality. It's a good sign.

And yeah it is. It's Jason. He takes me from Quiznos to a great brewpub.

It's called Milly's Tavern, and, like everything else in Manchester, is in an old mill. (Well, a few things are in old factories.) Before the bar, Jason wants to take me to the river, like Al Green. But it's just too cold.

Inside, I check out the beer menu. Neither of us has eaten dinner, so we also check out the food menu. Nothing special. Burgers, quesadillas, bar food. But the beer menu well....

Usually a good name suckers me in. But for some reason I order the boringly named John Stark Porter. The best name is Hopnoxious IPA, but I'm not a big IPA fan.

An IPA is supposed to have: *high hop bitterness, high hop aroma, and high alcohol content.* At least according to the internet. But mostly, you get the bitterness, and not much else. Sometimes IPAs taste spoiled... rotten. I usually avoid them.

The porter is excellent. Dark, not quite as thick as Guinness, but still filling enough to ensure I can't finish my quesadilla! I have two of 'em. Porters, that is, not quesadillas. It's the best new beer of this trip.

Over dinner we talk. Jason has just come back from four years of teaching in Egypt. He loved Egypt and the Egyptian people. Quite a different point of view from my recent guests from Lebanon! But that's how I like it! And why I like traveling. A few days confirms that everybody is wrong about everything.

After Milly's, we go back to Jason's place... a condo that used to be a shoe factory. They kept the girders, boiler oven door and smokestack. A cool place to live.

Jason introduces me to his roommate whose name I forget. I'll call him Shasta. He's a tall thin guy, about 20. Now, he bends over a computer looking intently at a photo of what looks like himself.

"Admiring yourself?" I ask.

The guy turns to me with a face splitting smile. The kind people fall in love over.

"No," he says. "It's my brother."

I hear a faint twinge of an accent. Like he's from Africa, but an English speaking part. Later, Jason tells me that he's from The Gambia.

Yes! Now I'll have a chance to solve one of my life's great mysteries. Why is the Gambia *THE* Gambia? I know why the Bronx is *"the* Bronx." It used to be plural—Broncks. Plural places use "the": like the Bahamas, the United States, the Philippines. But Gambia??? That's not a plural.

By the time I think to ask him about "the," Shasta is off to bed. Me too, Then it hits me. NO! NO! NO! I am in New Hampshire. I *must* go to GG Allin's grave. I cannot leave the state

without a visit.

I quickly check the internet. It's 103 miles away—in the wrong direction. From there, it's seven more hours to Canada. Fuck-it, I'm going anyway. I'll pay for a motel one night—in Maine. I saw an ad for one in a free magazine. Around $60 a night. In a town with a brewpub. Orono, Maine.

Right now, it's off to get rid of the day's beer, and then hit the sack.

I dream about visiting GG's grave. There'll be one person—a beautiful skinny punk girl. She wears a used white wedding dress—just starting to fall apart. The white dress is in strong contrast to her jet-black hair. She'll have flowers in her hand—white roses, laying them on GG's grave. I'll walk up to her. She'll be startled.

"He.. hello," she'll say shyly. "Are you here to visit GG?"

I'll nod.

"I'm Mykel Board," I'll tell her, "I was a pal of GG's. I produced his two ROIR CDs. I played with him in New York. I wrote..."

"Mykel Board!" she'll say. "Of course I know you. You're famous. Let's pay our respects, then go back to my apartment and have wild anal intercourse."

Jason wakes me at 8AM. He offers me some fruit, breakfast cereal, tea. But he *doesn't have coffee*. Oh no. It could be deadly. When I wake up, I NEED COFFEE. I'm a caffe-betic. My body is incapable of producing the coffee enzyme on its own. If I don't get it from the outside, I will *die*! I don't mention this to my host, but I strain against the pain and have a banana.

Jason's got to go to work, and his roommate has early classes. Same university. They ask if I'd mind driving them.

"It's on the way to GG Allin," says Jason.

Of course, I don't mind, though I'd rather someone else takes the wheel. I haven't had my coffee yet.

I hand Jason the keys. He'll drive. Bags packed, the three of us navigate the factory condo corridors to the car. As we walk, I talk to Shasta.

"I hear you're from the Gambia," I tell him.

"That's right," he says.

"Could I ask you kind of a weird question?" I ask.

He looks at me warily, as if I'm going to violate some kind of taboo. Ask him about strange tribal rituals. The length of his body parts.

"Why is the Gambia, *the* Gambia? I mean I know why the Bronx is "the Bronx," but Gambia. I don't get it."

He smiles.

"Well, it's hard to know exactly. There are rumors... stories," he says. "But what I heard is that there are other African countries. Like Ghana, and Zambia. The English colonialists put "the" in so people wouldn't be confused. Gambia, Zambia, it's almost the same. You know the British. They love the word "the."

Is he pulling my leg?

After we hit the university and say our goodbyes, it's off to Littleton: the birth and final resting place of GG Allin. Then, an afternoon of wild sex with a goth punk in a wedding dress. Then back on the road to the special Brewery in Orono and the discount motel. Finally, on to New Brunswick, which, according to my guidebook, is home to a soap museum. Something I sure don't want to miss.

Up until today, I thought GG was born and buried in Hooksett, New Hampshire. When we pen-palled in the 1980s, all his mail came from there. Too bad. Hooksett is just north of Manchester. Littleton is a hundred miles away. And I need some coffee!

Ah, here's a place. A little country Inn. Rustic with a capital "R." Nice, but it could be Mr. Donut... as long as they have *coffee*!

I'm the only person in the place. The waitress hands me a menu and turns to leave.

"Er..." I say. "Could you bring me some coffee? Right away? Please?"

I guess it's the look of severe need imprinted on my face. In a few minutes, she's back with the coffee. I inhale it. What would the world be like without coffee? On this trip, I've been doing coffee more than usual, plus a Monster Energy Drink every day. Someday, they'll combine the two and heaven will lose its appeal. Why die, when you can drink heaven right here on earth?

This little roadside place doesn't serve breakfast. Lunch starts at 11:30. I'm here for openers. I order a salad. To drink? Just water. And more coffee! On the table, I notice a beer list. Wow!

A little place in the middle of who-knows-where, with an every day beer list like this? Guinness, Sam Adams White Ale, Woodstock Station Red Rack Ale, Stella Artois, Old Thumper...

Woodstock Station Red Rack Ale? Old Thumper? Holy He-Brew, Batman. These folks got something here we don't get down south where I come from. Yowsah!

I don't sample the Old Thumper or any other brew. But it's nice to know that folks around here care! A roadside place in New York would have, Bud, Bud Light, and maybe a Coors. I pay the bill and head back toward Littleton.

My Neverlost GPS doesn't have directions inside the town. I guess it's too small. I'll have to find GG myself.

I pull into the first gas station inside the town limits. I know GG's in the Saint Rose Cemetery. I ask the guys in the gas station office. The Indian guy doesn't know.

The other guy tells me, "There are two cemeteries in town. One just up the hill here. The other down the road about two miles. That's the big one. Down the road."

I thank him and walk out. Then... I'm really *pissed* at myself. Why didn't I ask? Why didn't I just say, "Which one has GG Allin?" Wadda wimp! I should be ashamed. I am ashamed.

I head toward the big cemetery, still annoyed at myself for not having the balls to ask. What would they have done to me? Called the sheriff?

Yo sheriff., There's another one of those creeps looking for GG Allin. I think you better throw him in the clink where he can get gang raped by unemployed lumberjacks.

I don't think so.

The cemetery is right where the non-Indian gas station guy said it would be. There's a large statue at the entrance. Something to do with some war.

Then, there's a small driveway. At the end of the driveway is a shed with a few gardening trucks parked around it. I get out of the car. Is this the right place? There are no signs anywhere... Saint Rose or not. And there are no people. There's snow, a ton of gravestones, some recently planted American flags. But no people. No mourners. No punkette in a white dress.

I wander around, looking at random tombstones. No GG Allin. Wait! There are a couple people over there. They look like gardeners. *I will ask*!

I trudge across the remains of dozens of locals until I reach the guys. One is about my age, blond and husky. The other is in his twenties, lanky, kinda handsome. As I get closer, I realize they're not gardening. They're digging a grave. I've never talked to gravediggers before. They're a little scary. But I will NOT wimp out.

"Excuse me," I ask.

They stop their digging and stand up, looking at me. Not sardonic, exactly, but not Laurel and Hardy either.

"Is this the Saint Rose cemetery?" I ask.

"Nope," says the older one.

"Do you know where it is?" I ask.

"Yep," says the younger one.

That's all he says.

"Umm..." I say.

"We were just jokin' with ya," says the older guy, suddenly breaking into a smile. "It's right over there, next to this one."

"Do you know where GG Allin is?" I ask.

"Oh sure," says the young guy. He gives me directions to the tombstone, making a little map in the snow. It's weird he knows, I think.

"I guess people come here and ask you all the time," I say.

"Yep," he says.

"Has a punk rock girl in a white dress..." I don't ask.

GG's grave is a couple rows in from the street. It's a good size stone, easy to find. Who could miss "Rock'n'roll Terrorist" among the

"You're in a better place now"? Next to the tombstone is a huge *empty* bottle. The label is mostly gone. I'm guessing Jim Beam, GG's favorite. There's also a full airline-size bottle of JB, and an empty can of *Monster*! Hubba hubba!

There is, however, no goth girl in a white dress. There's no nobody.

I take out my camera, put it on the headstone across from GG, set the auto-timer and run around for the picture of me and GG.

Then I notice that the tombstone is double duty. I've never seen anything like it before. It must be a discount brand. Half as expensive for half as much tombstone. Usually one side is blank anyway, right? Why not make a few bucks and sell the back to someone else?

On the front of the headstone is: "GG ALLIN Live Fast Die!" On the back is a picture of a praying Jesus and the name "Gunther" with the inscription, "Till We Meet and Never Part. ".

Poor Gunther. Little did he know who he was gonna never part with. Meet? I doubt it. Unless Gunther was a nasty guy, GG and he are in very different places.

I spend about half an hour with GG and Gunther, then head back northeast. Somewhere between Littleton and Orono, I stop for gas. There, in the window of the gas station office is an advertisement.

JAVA MONSTER ENERGY DRINK. NEW COFFEE FLAVORS: Loca Moca, Mean Bean, Russian, Irish Blend, Nut Up, Chai Hai, Lo Ball

Wowee!! GG was listening to me. Reaching up from hell, he manipulated the minds at Monster and they followed my bidding. Coffee Monster!

Thanks, GG. But why couldn't you have done it with the girl in the wedding dress?

Next stop: University Inn. My only motel of the trip.

They want to let me know they participate in this new environmental program. A co-op of mid-priced hotels is the sponsor.

It's promoted with laminated brochures with pictures of pandas and parrots. And the great way the motel is saving the world? They don't wash their linens.

That's right. In order to save the world's resources of soap and water, they use less of it. Of course, you can decline to participate. It's right there on the brochure. But if you don't participate, you're personally responsible for the destruction of the Amazon rainforest. You're personally wasting hundreds of gallons of water and fouling thousands of acres of wetland with the soap used to wash *your* bedclothes. Yeah, right.

Look Mr. Hotel, if you want to save money on water and soap. That's okay. It's a business. If you want me to help, pay me for it. Give me a discount. But *pul-ease*, don't ask me to sleep in my own filth and then *you* go take credit for a hotel program to save the environment. Maybe the environment around your bank account.

The girls at the front desk are helpful, but lack some kind of spark. They don't joke around. They don't offer to *change my sheets*. I donno. I guess at a hotel you see everything, so nothing is funny anymore. All those spy cams behind the mirrors in the rooms. Not much left to joke about, is there?

"You a beer drinker?" I ask the chubbier of the two young deskgirls. "I'm looking for a famous brewpub around here. They make their own beer, and I wanna try it."

"Oh," she replies. "You're talking about the Bearmarket Pub. You can walk there from here. It's just over the bridge."

"What's good there?" I ask.

"Oh, I don't like dark beer. But they make a great Peach Ale."

"Thanks," I say and head out the door, across the bridge to the pub.

It's cold, so a nice thick stout (pleonasm?) will do perfectly. Maybe I'll be adventurous and try the peach ale.

The place could be any country bar in any country college town. Lots of 20-somethings... kids saying "hi" to their friends, ignoring strangers. Especially strange guys who look like Inspector Gadget sitting by themselves at a table for four, writing on tiny cards. There are more beards and wool caps than you'd see in New York. In New York, they'd make you take off your hat.

As I enter, I hear the attractive waitress speaking with some guys at a table.

"We're out of stout," she says.

The waitress brings me the menu.

The beer list is impressive: Chocolate Stout, Tuff End Porter, Crow Valley Pale Ale, Bearbrew Blueberry Weiss, Sacred Peach Ale, Pumpkin Stout, India Pale Ale...

"I overheard that you were out of stout," I tell her. "So I'll take your Tuff End." (I love saying "*I'll take your Tuff End*" to an attractive waitress.)

"Sorry," she says. "We're out. We're out of all our Bearbrew Beers... except the IPA."

One drink later, I'm back at the hotel. I climb into one of the two twin beds... with my boots on. Then I take a shower and use every towel in the bathroom to dry myself. Next, I take care of my ... er... personal night-time needs, cleaning up with the same sheet I wiped my boots on.

Then, since I'm only staying for one night, I hang the "I will participate in the Hotel Conservation Program. Do not change linen." sign on my door, and go to bed. In the other bed. I sleep through the night... best sleep so far this trip.

In the morning, I use my thumb to pick the night's refuse from my nose, rubbing the bloody boogers on the sheet.

Eco this, baby!

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links, some pix, and a chance to leave comments on the column]

—>*My kinda protest dept: Utne Reader* reports that American Indian students at the University of Northern Colorado are protesting a local high school's Indian mascot. Instead of stupidly asking that the name be banned, they've answered in kind. The Indians call their own intramural basketball team the Fighting Whities. The team's jerseys have the name of the team and the phrase, "Everythang's gonna be all white."

—>*Not Exactly Living, but Better dept:* New Orleans voters approved a "living-wage" referendum that raises the minimum wage for "private-sector workers" to $6.15 an hour. That's a buck more than the federal minimum wage. It's about time that corporations had someone to answer to besides the fuckin' marketplace! Eco that, motherfuckers.

—>*Pay Because You Want To Dept:* Radiohead made news when it allowed fans to pay whatever they wanted to download the band's album. Now, several restaurants are doing the same thing—letting their patrons decide how much their meal is worth. At Terra Bite Lounge in Kirkland, WA, most diners slip cash into a donation slot by the bar. A few walk away without bothering to pay. "If I forget to bring enough money, I can just give more next time," says a patron. At Salt Lake City's One World Everybody Eats, you can deposit cash into a "treasure box" or use the customer-operated credit card machine. The 50-seat restaurant, decorated with Buddha statues, serves organic dishes from a buffet. There's also an edible herb and flower garden with outdoor seating. "All we ask is that you put a fair price on the food you eat, based on your income," says founder Denise Cerreta. At the Lentil As Anything chain in Melbourne, Australia, you drop money into a box by the kitchen. The first restaurant opened in 2000, and now owner Shanaka Fernando is working on his sixth location. The cuisine is a mix of Sri Lankan and Tibetan, but eggs and veggie burgers are also on the menu. "When it comes down to it, we just want to promote the very underutilized concept of trust," says Shanaka.

—>*The other side of the grave dept:* I got a message from GG lover and guitar play, Justion Melkmann. He visited GG's grave as well as GG's mother. He was making a comic book about his obsession with the scum-meister. It hit him after seeing what I posted in my blog. Gunther, he says, is GG's mom's maiden name. So the tombstone must be a place-holder for her to be buried by her son. Too touching for my taste. I've got the better story.

Justin has THE TRUTH. Which do *you* want?

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

Australia has been fucking busy over the last few months. Our currency has some actual value in the world now that the US has sunk all it's future into total war, so we're able to finally afford to press records and sell them for a reasonable price here and internationally. There's also a level of interest in the US and Europe for Australian punk that's unseen since the murder days of the 1980s, so it's becoming more viable for Australian bands to tour overseas than ten years ago. If you are curious about Australian punk, then here are five records you need to hear:

1. X – "Aspirations" LP
2. The Saints – "(I'm) Stranded" LP
3. Chosen Few – "The Joke's On Us" LP
4. Upsets – "Back To Afghanistan" EP
5. Razar – anything and everything

My time is now tied up tight, so I can't make you a tape or burn you a CD or make your life easier. Here's a suggestion to all the intrepid travelers into the world of raw and unholy punk and hardcore musics. Your life has been made too easy with the internet and file sharing and fansite vanity pages. You need to feel some sweat on your brow and some crabs crawling on your junk. After you read this issue and your heart is fluttering with desire to hear the best head scouring NOISE, instead of shooting me an email asking me to tape trade or fileshare or whatever the fuck, why don'tcha apply some lipstick, hitch up your waste line, and try flirting with your local record nerd? In exchange for a two-stroke moment of humiliation and degradation you could get a 90 minute cassette of murder punk singles or Birdman live spots! The experience will probably endear you to complete strangers as you relay the hilarious story of the first time you contracted a venereal disease!

So, anyhow, some words on some new Australian shit…The new Eddy Current Suppression Ring record is out. For anyone with more than a passing interest in murder punk, this band captured all the charm and mess of the frantic Victims singles on their first couple of 7" releases, released a great self titled LP in 2006, and have followed up with an absolute bloody corker. Their approach has always been quite reserved and unpretentious which has earned them a fanatical crowd in Melbourne, and slowly the rest of the country is catching on. *Primary Colours* is comparable to the second Saints album *Eternally Yours* in that it's more of a studio album, less visceral and immediate (read: punk) than it's predecessor, but the songs are stronger and it's an overall better record to listen to. Their new songs are more distinctive, and borrow more from '80s Australian and New Zealand punk/post-punk and less from the '60s garage punk nuggets-of-sound. It's hot. *Primary Colours* is out on CD in Australia on Aarght records and on 12" soon on Goner records in the US.

The Inverted Crux label of Melbourne, Australia, has released many a home-recorded mess. Run with an iron fist by Sean Bailey (AKA Lakes, solo electro-noisepunk, like if Screamers decided to *only* cover Germs songs), the latest release that I jumped on from Inverted Crux is the Wasted Truth cassette. Two seedy sedative dirges in the tradition of Flipper, which basically means in the tradition of writing long, pounding songs with little structure or direction, just the repetitive thumping of the bass and drum coloured with some feedback squeal and guitar drone and lyrics spat out through mouthfuls of pills.

Another cassette I received was from Tasmanian band Total Dick Junkies, who play horrible, irritating snotty punk tunes, bringing to mind everything that was horrible and irritating and fuckin' great about the Vom or early-Freeze material, and a lotta that late-'70s amphetamine-fueled Americana that's been compiled and celebrated by many a nerd over the past few years. The best comparison for you fucks would be Freestone because it's probably a parody or humorous gesture from a bunch of should-know-better types with good record collections… and not the leather-jacket-wearing-pimple-popping-hang-around-the-house-all-day-drinking-mummy-and-daddy's-homebrew-and-shooting-rabbits-in-the-fields Tasmanian hick punk fucks that I'm hoping put this together. This is pretty scummy and inept, not for the weak. These guys sound like they'd look at you and your genitals would itch and break out in open sores.

Then there's Bulldog Spirit who have recently released their new EP *Ain't No Angel*, and who sound more humourless and, like they insist in the uncredited Negative Approach cover, "Ready To Fight." This EP is a great combination of the bluesy hard rock of Rose Tattoo and the early American skinhead hardcore bands (Agnostic Front and Negative Approach), and while it occasionally slips into some modern tough hardcore influenced rhythm and blues, there's some great moments that I can already picture Bruce Roers losing his mind over, like the title track "Ain't No Angel." In fact, I'm going to predict the future right here in Bruce's column: *All right you fuckers! This month we've got a great new CD from Australia to contend with! Bulldog Spirit have released a new EP called* Ain't No Angel! *Check these lyrics: "I ain't no fuckin' angel. I'm just a man. I'm not the best. I'm not the worst. Just doing the best I can."* This EP was released on Trial and Error, who also released the new Meatlocker full length CD. I talked this UK band up in a previous column so I'm not going to spend more time with them—I'm getting a name for repeat performances here—but if you liked Voorhees then and you still like the tough Boston hardcore now…

Finally in this round up of patriotic talk, The Focus have released a new 7". The Focus is very reminiscent of the US mid-'80s, punk bands that began listening to UK post-punk. I'd say if you like the mid-period releases from Mission of Burma, Husker Du and the Proletariat, then you are hanging with the Focus next weekend. I know for a lot of people these rounds of influences translates to the weak, horrible music of bands like Hot Water Music or Against Me, charlatans who have captured many minds with their poisonous influence. The modern punk landscape is littered with music attempting to capture their limp, pale rockin', but rest assured the Focus is not party to this. They lean heavily into dark wave post-punk on their better tunes, and I'd like to hear them lean more in that direction. Unfortunately, the mastering to vinyl has obscured the music in a murky fuzz, but the persistent listener will be rewarded. It's out on a couple of European labels with names too horrifying to mention here, but let's just say that you can get it from the band themselves, and I'll even make it easier for you by saying they can be emailed at thefocus.1937@gmail.com

Now here's some non-nationalistic talk about other new records.

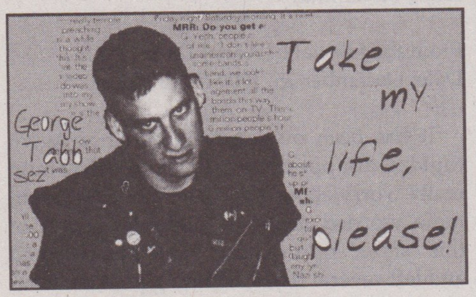
Dave from Straightjacket Nation held forth the Los Monjo record comparing it to a bunch of Spanish punk bands and recommending it highly. He's responsible for turning me onto Eskorbuto and a bunch of other classy joints, so I'm pretty trusting when he gives a recommendation of good Spanish punk, and this band. from Mexico, plays music steeped in the rich tradition of the Spanish punks, most notably RIP. Also, interestingly enough, they sound very similar to *Legacy Of Brutality*-era Misfits, but instead of a demonic croon you're hearing a pissed off Mexican chanting "rebelion." Fucking excellent tunes here!

I picked up the new 7" from German hardcore band Press Gang. Shit man. This one just pushed me over the line. It's a shame that some Germans spent hours writing and perfecting their tunes, hours in the studio recording and arguing with some goateed dweeb in a Fender shirt about their guitar tone, hours of laying out and deliberating over the art-

work and colour separation of their sleeve, and probably hours to pour over every fanzine they get, turn to the reviews and scour the P section, to have to read me groan: "The purchase points in record stores and distribution tables are crowded with pale modern US hardcore throwbacks, you all might wanna think about trying to play faster, slower or not at all." I can't deal with it.

As you read this, Straightjacket Nation would have finished our US tour. Next month I'll probably have something to say about it as I'll be in some internet café in Baltimore attempting to write this column. At the moment I'm getting ready to leave tomorrow. Thanks for having us, America. Thanks for the diseases.

If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise, or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan, or Sweden, get in touch. My address is DANIEL STEWART: PO BOX 239, NORTH CARLTON, VICTORIA 3054, AUSTRALIA. If you'd like to email me, try distorttheworld@gmail.com.



It's been quite a while since I've even thought of that great TV show, *The X Files*. Now I hear they are making a new movie. The second one. I used to love the show a lot and the spinoff, *The Lone Gunmen*, which had a guy who ALWAYS wore Ramones t-shirts. When I met him, he told me his idol was Joey Ramone! How fucking cool is that?

Anyway, I'm kinda getting sicker and I have had this story sitting around and I figure now that the second movie is coming out, well, here's what the movie SHOULD be! Punk Rock and Enjoy!

THE X-MAS FILES

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder.
Date: December 24, 1997 22:00 Hours.

After receiving orders from Agent Skinner, Scully and I have found ourselves on an FBI jet headed toward an undisclosed location somewhere north of the polar ice caps. As I sit here on this plane, staring at my reflection in the tinted multi-layer glass, I ponder my fate this Christmas Eve. Just six hours earlier, I was home, alone, drinking a bottle of Malibu rum, and thinking about all the strange twists and turns my life has taken recently. It is as if some B-rate television writer has taken control of my life. And Scully's.

I am also concerned about Agent Scully. After her brief but horrid battle with the cancer of unknown origin, she has fully recovered, and is again looking very healthy. Too healthy. She has put on the pounds. Lots of them. Her ass is getting a little plump, and her breasts seem to sag. While I once may have wanted to bed her, I'd now rather fantasize about myself. I look damn good in my suits.

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From the journal of Agent Dana Scully.
Date: December 24, 1997 22:00 Hours.

I have found myself seated next to Mulder on a flight to what I suspect is the North Pole. Stories about strange activities at Santa's workshop have been circulating around the office, and I have been partially briefed by Agent Skinner on this matter. Mulder, on the other hand, has not been told anything. The Bureau feels that Mulder may get the idea some huge conspiracy is taking place, involving alien abductions, the Kennedy assassination, re-animation of dead cells, gerbils, and Richard Gere.

As I sit next to my partner of four years, I do wonder about him. He was spending this Christmas Eve, home, alone, and drinking. Malibu. Everyone knows a real man drinks Jack Daniels, or Jim Beam. Also, his taste in suits is becoming ever so feminine. Especially with those lavender ties and pink triangle cufflinks. Plus, he doesn't look at me like he used to. And every guy wants me. Earlier, I swear I saw him wink at the pilot. I suspect that Agent Mulder may be gay. But I dare not tell Agent Skinner, or the Bureau. For fear he'll be transferred to The Navy. Or the triple-top-secret branch of the FBI; the XXX-Files.

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
Date: December 24, 1997 23:15 Hours.

We have arrived at NPIX. The North Pole International Airport. As we exited the plane, Scully and I were met by a gang of Hare Krishnas in snorkel jackets, and an Agent Donnerski. A native of the area—a true North Pole. He informed us that strange activities were taking place at Santa's workshop, and that we were here to investigate the situation, and to see if the paranormal is involved. Since I've never met the bearded man in the red suit, this mission is sort of a thrill but Scully seems unexcited. As usual. Sometimes she can be such a stuck-up bitch.

We then drove in a Jeep to Agent Donnerski's sled, and are currently heading toward the workshop, being pulled along by a dozen or so dogs who continue to bark in the frigid air. I can see their breath as they haul Donnerski, myself and that cow Scully, plus our luggage.

***

From the journal of Agent Dana Scully
Date: December 25, 1997 00:00 hours.

After a long and horrid sled ride, seated on top of Mulder's sixty-pound suit bag, we have arrived at The Workshop. It is quite an incredible sight, actually. The building, guarded by a twelve-foot snow fence, and elves at the gate is incredibly large, oval-shaped, and has enough blinking lights on it to put any casino in Vegas to shame. When I asked Donnerski about the electricity needed to power such an array of lights, he brushed me off saying something suspicious about a barter deal with the local power company.

As we traveled through the snow, I noticed something strange about Mulder as well. Instead of looking at me, and my shapely body in my new Prada overcoat, Mulder stared at Agent Donnerski, or the dogs. Even when I exposed some cleavage, Mulder did not look in my direction. Now my nipples are frozen like tiny ice caps. It'll take my blow dryer to thaw them.

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
Date: December 25, 1997 00:30 hours.

We have entered what can only be described as a spherical-shaped building full of light and wonderment. As Scully and I entered the facility, Agent Donnerski warned us about The Bearded Man, and then took off very quickly. Leaving us alone and leaving me to carry my own suit bag.

We were then greeted by a bunch of tiny creatures, which Scully told me were "elves." Their oblong shaped eyes and grayish skin led me to believe they may not be who they claim to be.

The "elves" then led us down many corridors, and through many doors that opened and closed on their own. It seems that The Bearded Man has invested in a lot of high-tech equipment. As we followed the little people I could not help but notice Scully's fat ass. She's gotta lay off the Twinkies and the potato chips.

***

From the journal of Agent Dana Scully
Date: December 25, 1997 00:45 hours.

After what seemed like hours, but was actually only a matter of minutes, Mulder and I were led to The Bearded Man through a maze of lights and tunnels. As we ventured toward Santa, I noticed Mulder looking at the elves with a peculiar look. I'm not sure, but I think he is sexually attracted to them. I also noticed him looking at my rear end. At least he still has some interest in women.

The head elf, "Herbie," who explained to us on our way to The Bearded Man that he wanted to be a dentist one day, finally introduced us to Santa: The Bearded Man.

Wearing a red suit with white cuffs, a red hat, and a look of despair in his eyes, Santa greeted us, and began to explain rapidly that things up here in the North Pole were not normal. He informed Mulder and I that the elves he hired a few years back were acting stranger and stranger. When we asked what happened to the old elves, he told us they all died of some sort of bacterial infection that caused their blood to turn white, and then spurt out of every body orifice. Santa then went on to explain that new elves suddenly showed up, demanded a ten-percent pay hike, and were hired right away due to lack of help. For some reason, thinking of all those elves spurting white fluid excites me.

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
Date: December 25, 1997 01:15 hours

The Bearded Man seems very distressed. Besides hiring a whole new batch of elves, which I suspect are gray aliens, he seems to be suffering from some sort of memory disorder. His movements and speech seem to mimic those of Ronald Reagan, but I can't be sure.

Santa informed Scully and I that things in the North Pole have been odd since he hired the new elves. He explained to us that now, instead of making different toys for all the good little children, he produces only one product. Snow. Not real snow. The kind of snow that goes into snow globes. He tells us that children from all over the world now only want snow globes, and that a company outside of Cleveland produces the rest of the product. He also explains that he, Santa, was instructed by the D.O.C.A.O.S.H, Department Of Christmas And Other Seasonal Holidays, to make the snow at breakneck speeds. He tells us that this business is killing him. I feel bad for the old-timer. And his suit is so passé.

***

From the journal of Agent Dana Scully
Date: December 25, 02:00 Hours

After being briefed by The Bearded Man, Mulder and I were taken on a tour of Santa's workshop. Everywhere we looked we saw elves in lab coats producing the "snow" needed for the globes Santa spoke about. Many elves wore gloves and masks, and while some used Bunsen burners to heat the snow, others seemed to be somehow inhaling it through odd glass tubes heated by mini-thermal devices.

Santa explained to us that he enjoyed it more when they made all sorts of fun toys, and when the elves actually talked by moving their lips. He says now that they speak to him telepathically, things just aren't the same. He also says that the old elves used to sing and dance and laugh. These new ones just produce the "snow" product twenty-four hours a day, and show no other interest in anything. Except for the occasional anal probe they perform on Santa and Mrs. Claus. When asked by Mulder why he allowed these bodily invasions to occur, The Bearded Man replied: "he liked the attention."

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
Date: December 25, 1997 02:30 Hours

My deepest wish, proof positive of alien beings here on this earth, has come true. And on Christmas Day. Before this trip up here, I was contemplating quitting the Bureau, upping my Prozac, and finding my sister, Samantha, who, at the age of eight, was abducted. But now I find myself, possibly among those who may have taken her.

As The Bearded Man babbles on about his dissatisfaction with his new working force, and having to fill out 10-99's for names he can't even spell, I wander around, staying in direct sight of Scully, which isn't hard, searching for clues to my sister's disappearance. Finally I show one of the elves her picture. He points me to a door with a strange symbol on it. I excuse myself from Santa and Scully, saying I have to use the restroom to straighten out my suit. Santa waves me away, and Scully just rolls her eyes.

I walk into the room behind the door with the symbol, and am amazed at what I see; literally hundreds-of-thousands of naked human beings encased in glass tubes with a thick-ish clear fluid, backlit by an eerie green light. The room must be the size of at least ten football stadiums, and I am floored. I look under each glass tube, and see names. My sister must be here, somewhere.

***

From the journal of Agent Dana Scully
Date: December 25, 1997 02:45 Hours

The more I speak with The Bearded Man, the more I believe him to be senile and impotent. He hasn't once come on to me in any way. I hear that happens. Sometimes.

Finally, Santa excuses himself, telling me he has an enlarged prostate, and needs to urinate frequently. I tell him I'll meet him right back where I am in a few minutes. As soon as Santa leaves, I investigate my surroundings.

With Agent Mulder God knows where, I begin by looking closely at the elves, and the snow they are producing. I ask one of them, in a lab coat, and dark glasses, if I can see a sample. It gives it to me in a small plastic bag. I spill out some of the powder on my hand, and then, very carefully, taste it by dipping my pinkie into the tiny pile of white flakes. It tastes familiar, and numbs my mouth. I then take out a dollar bill from my purse, roll it up, and inhale the rest of the pile. I feel a head rush like I've never had. I also feel my body tremble, and swear I have my first non-friction orgasm. I then come to the conclusion that The Bearded Man is in the business of making drugs. Good ones. I must find Mulder. But first I must inhale some more of this snow.

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
Date: December 25, 1997 03:00 Hours

These aliens must use an ancient alphabet. Either that, or they can't spell for shit. Names are spelled incorrectly, and finding Samantha may take eons. I did find a fat man with a pompadour, and the name Evils Prelsey underneath the tube. I wonder. I also found a tube containing whom I believe to be Marilyn Monroe. Now she, was a woman. But I wasn't aware she dyed her pubic area until now. I wonder if Scully does. If she is naturally a red head?

I just passed a tube with Jimmy Hoffa in it. Also a tube with Barbara Stanwick. I wasn't aware she was so well hung. But where is my sister, Samantha?

***

From the journal of Agent Dana Scully
Date: December 25, 1997 03:45 Hours

It has been over two hours since Agent Mulder disappeared, and I know I should really worry about his whereabouts but I am more worried about not getting enough of this "snow" up my nose. Santa has returned and left several times, claiming prostate trouble, but I see the white powder stuck to the bottom of his nose.

This "snow" is wonderful. The more I inhale, the more I orgasm. I can feel my crotch wet with excitement. I am considering doing an elf if Mulder doesn't return soon. I need it really bad.

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
Date: December 25, 1997 03:55 Hours

I have found my sister Samantha, encased in one of the large glass tubes. It is strange seeing my sister again. After all these years. Especially naked. It reminds me of when we used to play doctor.

As she floats helplessly in a coma-like state, I wonder how to free her. Finally I say, "fuck it," to myself, and shoot open the case with my Glock. Warm sticky fluid pours out all over my Bally of Switzerland shoes, and practically ruins them. Samantha begins to blink her eyes, and then cough. She is alive.

***

From the journal of Agent Dana Scully
Date: December 25, 1997 04:15 Hours

Mulder has returned with his younger sis-

ter, Samantha, in tow. I have lent her my Prada coat to help warm her. That sticky fluid all over her naked body is going to ruin it, but I don't care. It probably has something to do with the drugs The Bearded Man is making.

I inform Mulder that Santa is in the manufacturing of mind altering substances business. Mulder says he suspects that The Bearded Man may unknowingly have joined forces with a gray alien race, who have been working covertly with the D.O.C.A.O.S.H., to smuggle drugs around the world to raise money for weapons to fight off the whites. The other race of aliens. Mulder also believes that he has seen the bodies of Elvis, Marilyn Monroe, Jimmy Hoffa, and The Easter Bunny. The guy believes in too many fairy tales. But I still want to jump his bones, anyway. After I do another line.

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
Date: December 25, 1997 04:25 Hours

Scully has told me that she suspects a covert drug operation, and after tasting the merchandise, I believe her. I also believe she is very high. Her pupils are the size of pencil points, and she keeps thrusting her hips in my direction, suggestively. After sampling Santa's magic "snow" a little more, I begin to find myself attracted to Scully. Her red hair. Her soft but sagging breasts. Even her mud flaps. I'd do her right here, but my sister is around, and she might tell our dad. Also, we are at work, Santa is being used, and the "elves" are acting mighty strange.

We both explain to Santa what we perceive to be going on, and The Bearded Man listens intently. When we are through explaining our theories to him, he tells us it makes total sense. That he never trusted these new elves anyway. They never stole from the job.

Suddenly we all feel the ground start to shake. Well, not as much as shake, but vibrate. Santa says he thinks we should follow him to his office and we do.

***

From the journal of Agent Dana Scully
Date: December 25, 1997 04:45 Hours

"He wants me! He wants me!" is all I can think as Mulder, Samantha, and I follow Santa to his office. We are led down many different corridors as we feel the ground and walls vibrate. Samantha starts to cry, claiming she is scared. I'm so tanked on that white shit, I don't really give a rat's ass.

I also noticed Mulder checking me out. He looked at my breasts, and my rear end. Maybe he's not gay. Just overly vain. I'm glad I'm not like that.

We finally reach Santa's office, and are shocked, like Santa, at what we see.

Lining the walls of The Bearded Man's office are all sorts of lights and switches. The elves are not dressed in white lab coats, but rather silver type suits, with helmets. The interior of this room is less an office, and more of a bridge of a space ship. One of the elves, who I now know is actually an alien, speaks to us all telepathically.

"Agent Mulder. Agent Scully. Santa Claus. You have discovered our secret plot, and therefore, we cannot remain here in the North Pole. Even if we were to kill you all, or throw you in suspended animation, others would come looking for you, and eventually we would be found out. Your ratings on Sunday nights are just too high. And you, Santa, really should be making toys. We are sorry for the inconvenience we have caused you since our arrival here, and now if you will kindly exit this ship, we are about to take off and find a new location. You will find the exits clearly marked."

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
December 25, 1997 05:00 Hours

Scully, Samantha, and I followed Santa quickly to an exit, and left the building as fast as we could. As we backed away from Santa's workshop, it began to vibrate so intensely I felt myself getting exited. Suddenly all the lights on the workshop started to blink in patterns that I hadn't seen since the night Samantha was abducted. Then the workshop rose into the air, and suddenly went dark. We stared at the oval shaped building, which we now knew to be a UFO. Or flying saucer. Then it just zipped away, in a matter of milliseconds.

I looked over at Santa. He had a confused look on his face. I asked him where Ms. Claus was, and he told me she was safe. That she was away this year in Hawaii. A trip funded by the D.O.C.A.O.S.H.

I then looked over at my sister Samantha. The girl I'd been searching for, for years. I hugged her and thanked God for letting me find her. As she hugged me back, I knew that this night I got a Christmas gift I'd never forget.

As Samantha snuggled next to me for warmth and protection from her older brother, I looked over at Scully. Her warm smile and halfway-buttoned shirt said it all.

***

From the journal of Agent Dana Scully
December 25, 1997 07:00 Hours

After a long walk back to NPIX, we called Skinner, told him of our findings, and checked into a hotel. The Bearded Man got his own room, as did Mulder's sister, Samantha. Fox and I, however, got one together—to save The Bureau money, of course.

As we each lay in our own separate beds, Mulder looked at the ceiling and asked me if I now believed in extra-terrestrial life. I told him I wasn't sure, what we may have just seen could have been an illusion. Or some elaborate hoax concocted by The C.I.A., The D.O.D., and The A.S.P.C.A. He seemed upset by my observations, so I offered him some of Santa's "snow." I'd filled my purse with it before we left. He took some, and then more. And more. And more.

***

From the journal of Agent Fox Mulder
December 25, 1997 09:00 Hours

So what if Dana Scully is a tight-assed bitch and doesn't believe in anything. After doing a purse full of drugs, her and I went at it like two dogs in heat. I don't think I've ever had sex like that, and now, as I lay here in bed, having a smoke, with Agent Scully asleep at my side, I feel that everything in the cosmos will be okay for another day. That this vast and wonderful place that we call the universe, is ever expanding, and will always raise more questions than answers. That life is a magical thing, and all the mysteries that come with it should be seen as gifts to those who seek the truth. And, fuck, I left my suits on that damn ship.

***

From the journal of Agent Santa Claus
December 25, 1997 09:05 hours

Agents Mulder and Scully have finally stopped going at it, and I may finally get some rest. The amount of noise those two make while having sex is enough to make a baby seal beat itself to death.

I will leave on an earlier flight to Washington tomorrow, and report to Agent Skinner and the higher authorities before Mulder and Scully. They must continue to believe that I am a senile old man who may have been involved with aliens. The truth would be too much for them to handle. Although, I would have suspected Mulder to figure it out long ago. Silly humans. Believing in an old man in a red suit who makes toys for children. Frank Black from the Millennium Group knows better. He has figured out that "Santa" is just an anagram.

Hail myself.

Merry Christmas.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. New *Iron Man* game from Sega any minute now. Looks fucking great.
2. www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb—Ramones007 on Xbox Live.
3. I've said it before and I'll say it again…the new Potato Famine records from Salem Ashtray is da schnizzle, rizzle. Oops, it's 2008. It's, um, yeah, better than American Idol and hotter than the chicks in *Rock Of Love*. Even *Rock Of Love 2*. Also, again, check out The BloodRunners on MySpace. Very Dead Boys. Speaking of, I just got the full DVD from

MVD with their live set at the Ritz in 1986. Great one camera shoot. It's great to see my pal Jeff rocking out, and my buddy Cheetah being the rock god he is. And Stiv? The hair had to go! Oi vey! Also, what's very cool is there is an interview from *Good Morning Youngstown* with Stiv on the DVD, plus the video for "Sonic Reducer" I used to see at The Ritz all the time in 1980 and 1981. I watched it closely and there is no Cheetah. I guess this was made when that Frank guy joined the band who is also on *Good Morning Youngstown* with Stiv. The great thing about this is Stiv talks about Punk Rock and what it really is, and NO ONE has ever said it better. Check it out to see what I'm talking about! Down in Flames, baby!

4. I got *Meet The Spartans* on DVD. It was so funny I had to go rent *300* to see what the big joke was. I have found both movies to be wonderful. *300* in it's wonderful visuals, and *Meet The Spartans* in a very very very clever parody.

5. This year's *NBA Ballers* is lots of fun if you are into that sort of thing. Better bling brother. And I'm really happy with *World Heroes Anthology* and *Fatal Fury – Battle Archives Volume 2*. Reminds me of the great arcade days. These SNK titles rock as hard now as they did all those years ago.

6. If you haven't, watch the *X-Files* when it's on in reruns, it's really funny in a very sick sort of way. The new *Dr. Who* on BBC and Sci-Fi, as well. Both are very smart, clever, and get this, most of all, Punk Rock! You'll see!!!

don't try
by dave

I'm starting to have a serious election hangover and we're still months away from a general election. Obama this, Hillary that—Reverend Dude and his what-can-only-be-described-as-comedic outburts, gas tax voter bribery, every fucking primary being make or break, John McCain's weird arm movements, the national enquirer masquerading as cable news foolishness, people voting for a candidate because they'd be fun to hang out with, and the Bush machine continuing to plunder away while the media ignores everything else. Oh please just let it all end. King Diamond for president once and for all.

I haven't left Olympia for over a month now. I celebrated my birthday a few weeks ago with the intention of going to see some mixed martial arts fights in Lacey, the city next to Olympia and one that is vastly different for being only a mile or two away.

Mostly you find low IQ neanderthal jock morons who are typically fans of mixed martial arts and other bloodsports, yet I nonetheless have become an avid fan of this illegal in 50 percent of America sport. Watching two guys who've agreed to fight each other in the octagon with specific rules seems all right to me morally. And the variety of combat styles in MMA makes it 10 times more interesting than a typical boxing match.

So twelve fights were scheduled including a championship. These were XCC league fights which are not the primo fighters of the UFC and WEC but who gives a fuck. It's guys fighting in a cage. Ground and pound. I'm in. My friend Tenaya bought the tickets the week before at the downtrodden Hawks Prairie Casino, which is little more than a glorified card room.

Alas, it was not to be. We drove all the way out to where the fight was scheduled to be held (which was admittedly only about ten miles but that seems far when you live here) and there was nobody there. There was no indication that the fight had been cancelled, there was just no one around and the doors were locked. Some other people showed up too. We phoned the casino and my worst fears were realized. Fight night was cancelled, refunds at the casino. Fuck. Now I guess I'll have to trek it down to the next Rumble at the Roseland in Portland. Happy fucking birthday.

***

Been a pretty weak month for all things metallic but here's a summary of some stuff that came my way and other shit I tracked down.

Todesbonden plays gothic metal in a style that's different from most European bands of that ilk on their album *Sleep Now, Quiet Forest.* Female fronted vocals are operatic most of the time and at others like Lisa Gerrard from Dead Can Dance. The music occasionally has the elegance of Dead Can Dance as well, like on the piano-laced "Trianon", and it's those tracks that are most preferable. An otherwise tepid affair in a style I don't particularly care for. Acoustic guitars and violin make regular appearances. Amber Asylum fans may enjoy. On the Prophecy label.

Altar Of Plagues is an Irish band with a well-packaged self-released CD titled *Sol*. Three epic tracks in all. Altar Of Plagues plays blackened post-metal that most closely resembles Wolves In The Throne Room when they're blasting away, and Isis when they're not. "Twisted Structures Against The Sun" is a song with many peaks and valleys during its 11+ minutes. "With Fire In Our Veins We Drown In Light" is the centerpiece, 14 minutes of heavy building, collapsing riffage, meditative breaks and finally furious black metal. It won't be long before this band is well known if they can break out of the Irish ghetto that often seems to hold back metal bands from there. Check www.altarofplagues.com for info.

A year or two ago Moribund re-released the 1998 album *Wanderings* by the obscure USBM solo project I Shalt Become. Now a new album has surfaced titled simply *Requiem*. I hadn't heard I Shalt Become before the re-release but was instantly into its repetitive, dark ambience. Clearly bands like Xasthur had taken influence from the sound. Now with *Requiem,* S. Holliman continues his loner dirge with more trance-inducing, basement dungeon, suicidal bleakness. Like Xasthur the music creates a kind of narcotic haze through repetition and the Burzum influence is obviously here too. Particularly *Filosofem*-era Burzum, though more in its trance quality as it lacks Filosofem's chainsaw guitar sound. In fact this album is light on distortion and at times sounds like a bleaker version of some long lost demo of discarded ideas for The Cure's *Pornography*-period. I Shalt Become's music is more stripped down and discernable than Xasthur's muddy cacophony, which makes it preferable for repeated listens. Good for those long, lonely walks through the forests in the country, or through the forests of decayed buildings in the big city.

Deadsea plays a pretty schizophrenic mash up of thrashy prog rock metal. There's some classic metal and stoner stuff thrown in as well. It's professionally executed by guys who seem to have been around for a while, but ultimately sounds over-indulgent and unfocused to my ears. Nothing to latch onto. I can't get into it. Released by Chrome Leaf.

The Bay Area's Skin Horse is named after a character in the *Velveteen Rabbit* but this isn't music for little children. Most would call this doom though of the experimental variety, and it's only heavy occasionally. I hear some Mindrot and Morgion elements on this three-song album that stretches out to 50 minutes in length. Not particularly my cup of tea but a lot of Bay Area heads dig this sound. You can hear the whole album on their site www.myspace.com/saidtheskinhorse. They're in search of a label for this Billy Anderson produced release.

Agrimonia is a Swedish band from Gothenburg that have self-released this debut CD-R. But this is more than a demo, it's a full-length album almost an hour long, very well-produced and presented. Agrimonia is playing a dark, depressive, cerebral and sometimes melodic metallic hardcore that has trace elements of Neurosis, Tragedy, and their Swedish brethren all at once. Ultimately though the band transcends their influences with a sound that's distinct. Songs such as "The Unknown Bury Me" and "Scars Make Life" are intricately woven with many peaks, valleys and tempo variations. Certain parts

have a Bolt Thrower-esque epic quality. Though Agrimonia may be a relatively new name, it's obvious from the quality the players have been around a while and spent time crafting this record into something special. Nice screen printed cardboard artwork as well. Some label will definitely end up releasing this thing. Really great, buy it directly from the band. They'll be playing at the Punk Illegal fest on June 28th in Sweden. The CD can be ordered for ?7 or $11 postpaid. Contact them at www.myspace.com/agrimonia.

Ugh, five seconds into Spitfire's *Cult Fiction* I am thoroughly un-stoked to hear mucho agro metal-core with wimp clean vocal choruses. I held out hope when I saw a song called "Dawn Patrol" but it's not even a Megadeth cover. Some of the music here isn't completely terrible (just mostly) but the horrible vocals really ruin this. Standard Dillinger Escape Plan angry-guy vox. I assume this is what bands like Norma Jean and other Botch clones sound like. But I wouldn't know. And neither should you.

The weirdos in Blut Aus Nord have returned. Their last LP *MoRT* was like a really desolate black metal Godflesh. On *Odinist: The Destruction Of Reason By Illumination* there isn't much of that mechanized aura. Meandering, churning compositions that bleed together into one black whole. Not aggressive in the least, Blut Aus Nord is more of a sinister suggestive presentation of satanic psychedelia. Blackened background music you might call this as it doesn't require a great amount of attention, and in that regard could be seen as a success or a disappointment. Very different from where they were on previous albums like *The Work Which Transforms God*. On the Candlelight label.

Crucial Blast has put out a new CD by a project called Gnaw Their Tongues. The CD, *An Epiphanic Vomiting Of Blood*, is like a slow funereal doom album and a horror soundtrack playing at the same time. Great songtitles like "My Body Is Not A Temple, Nor A Vessel. It Is A Repulsive Pile Of Sickness" and "The Urge To Participate In Butchery" enhance the nihilistic vibe of this strange release. Good for your next haunted house to scare the children.

Cough is the name of a Richmond band that plays monstrously slow doom with a groove. Their new full length CD on the Force Field label, *Sigillum Luciferi* is a blunt force sludge covered behemoth in the proud tradition of Eyehategod especially and Electric Wizard. Cough's got nothing new on the genre, but what they do, they do effectively enough that it doesn't matter. The riffs are good and memorable. Eyehategod toyed with faster songs at times but Cough keeps it slow throughout. Now that doom has largely moved on to artier pastures it's nice to hear something raw and dirty like this, more at home in the welfare line then the art gallery. A good kick in the south.

Dead Congregation is a Greek band and their LP *Graves Of The Archangels* has been out for a while now via the Nuclear War Now label. And as with most releases on that label, this album is a quality underground piece of work. Dead Congregation specializes in old-school death metal, a mix of the Swedish sound and American bands like Incantation and Immolation. Every song is dark, brutal no-nonsense old-school death metal with a powerful production that doesn't rely on the modern death metal aesthetic of clinical sterility.

Also on Nuclear War Now is a new album from the Mexican Morboso Metal kings Morbosidad. *Profana La Cruz Del Nazareno* is another blasphemous assault on all that is holy in the fine tradition of their prior bestial black death atrocities. Beherit, Blasphemy, Profanatica and other such bands are obvious influences, but adding elements of their Mexican heritage into the mix as well sets Morbosidad apart and gives *Profana* a distinctive vileness of its own. Pure filth. Brilliant. I got the "diehard" LP that comes with a couple posters, patch, sticker, heavy vinyl, etc. Nuclear War Now is one of the few labels that manages to deal in both quantity and quality—releasing high quality, great records seemingly on a monthly basis. Probably the best underground metal label around.

Also just released via Nuclear War Now are two LPs from pre-Angelcorpse/Ares Kingdom death metal firebrands Order From Chaos. Order From Chaos existed in the early-to-mid '90s and were much revered by a select few but sadly never gained much attention at the time, perhaps due to the fact they came from Kansas City, not exactly known as a stalwart of the death metal scene. Nonetheless these ripping albums had a sound that was different than other bands of the time, a sound committed to the true underground. A keen philosophical and historical sense permeates the albums lyrically and visually, which the controversial social Darwinist bandleader Pete Helmkamp would continue in Angelcorpse.

Other stuff I've been listening to lately worth your time to check out include Ash Pool's *World Turns On Its Hinge*, quality black metal from Dom Furnow of Prurient and Hospital Productions. Speaking of which Prurient's latest *And Still, Wanting* is a fierce noise record with enough variation to keep it interesting throughout, if noise be your thing. The Skull Defekts in another droning noise project of harsh power and decayed insane atmosphere whose Skkull release has left my mind in a permanent state of fear. Grey Daturas have a new release *Return To Disruption* out on Neurot that perhaps more than any other of their releases best presents their brainstew of improv guitar noise, post-rock, and crushing doom. And for a completely weirdo outsider vibe check out Lamborghini Crystal whose *1992 Cool Runnings, Little Deuce Coupe T.V. Dinners* and *Dial 747-Creepozoid* tapes are like a mix of '80s movie and TV soundtracks and damaged electro funk eccentricity played through a broken cassette deck left out in the sun too long. Fucking genius.

Old school records lately have consisted mainly of Liege Lord's thrashing power metal opus *Freedom's Rise*, a duo of Manilla Road records *Invasion* and *Metal*, both mandatory for your next NWOBHM party despite the fact they're from Kansas, and Morbid Saint's old underground death thrash classic *Spectrum Of Death*. Much chagrined was I to learn that a dude from Morbid Saint is now a baggy-panted-hair-braided dude in some cheesy going-nowhere nu-metal band. Your ten years too late, brah. How the mighty do fall!

That's it for this month folks. Next month I'll have news to report on Maryland *Deathfest* and the Coffins shows with The Endless Blockade, which I'll be traveling to the East Coast to be part of for a few days.

Contact info remains unchanged: Don't Try, 120 State Ave NE #136, Olympia, WA 98501 dontfuckingtry.blogspot.com

"Why are we talking about this in the White House?" John Ashcroft nervously asked his fellow members of the National Security Council's Principals Committee. (The Principals were Vice President Dick Cheney, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin Powell, CIA Director George Tenet and Attorney General Ashcroft.)

"History will not judge this kindly," Ashcroft predicted.

"This" is torture. Against innocent people. Conducted by CIA agents and American soldiers and marines. Sanctioned by legal opinions, issued by Ashcroft's Justice Department. Directly ordered by George W. Bush.

An April 11th report by ABC News describes how CIA agents, asked by previous presidents to carry out illegal "black ops" actions (torture and killings), had become tired of getting hung out to dry whenever their dirty deeds were revealed by the press.

When the Bush Administration asked the CIA to work over prisoners captured in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere, Director George Tenet demanded legal cover. The Justice Department complied by issuing a classified 2002 memo, the so-called "Golden Shield," authored by Office of Legal Counsel Jay Bybee. "Enhanced interrogation techniques"—i.e., torture—were legal, Bybee assured the CIA.

Tenet was a good boss, a CYA type. He wanted to protect his agents. So he got the Principals to personally sign off on each act of torture.

"According to a former CIA official involved in the process," ABC reported, "CIA headquarters would receive cables from operatives in the field asking for authorization for specific techniques." Can we beat up this guy? Can we waterboard him?

The Bushies weren't otherwise known for dwelling on details. Osama was in Pakistan; they invaded Afghanistan instead. Two years later, he was still in Pakistan. They invaded Iraq. Bush and his top officials still found time to walk through every step of torment a detainee would suffer in some CIA dungeon halfway around the world.

"The high-level discussions about these 'enhanced interrogation techniques' were so detailed, [Bush Administration] sources said, some of the interrogation sessions were almost choreographed—down to the number of times CIA agents could use a specific tactic. These top advisers signed off on how the CIA would interrogate top Al Qaeda suspects—whether they would be slapped, pushed, deprived of sleep, or subjected to simulated drowning, called waterboarding, sources told ABC news."

Bush knew.

Not only did he know, he personally approved it. He likes torture.

"Yes, I'm aware our national security team met on this issue," he confirmed. "And I approved."

When the US signs a treaty, its provisions carry the full force of US law. One such treaty is the UN Convention Against Torture, of which the US is a core signatory. As Philippe Sands writes in his new book "Torture Team:" Parties to the… Convention are required to investigate any person who is alleged to have committed torture. If appropriate, they must then prosecute—or extradite the person to a place where he will be prosecuted. The Torture Convention... criminalizes any act that constitutes complicity or participation in torture. Complicity or participation could certainly be extended not only to the politicians and but also the lawyers involved..."

George W. Bush has publicly confessed that he ordered torture, thus violating the Convention Against Torture. He, Cheney, Rumseld, Rice, and the other Principals must therefore be arrested and, unlike the thousands of detainees kidnapped by the US since 9/11, arraigned and placed on trial.

Because the torture ordered by Bush and his cabinet directly resulted in death, they must additionally be charged with several counts of murder. Fifteen US soldiers have been charged with the murders of two detainees at the US airbase at Bagram, Afghanistan in 2002. They were following orders issued by their Commander-in-Chief and his Principals.

One of the Bagram victims was Dilawar, a 22-year-old Afghan taxi driver. "On the day of his death," reported *The New York Times* on May 22, 2005, "Dilawar had been chained by the wrists to the top of his cell for much of the previous four days. A guard tried to force the young man to his knees. But his legs, which had been pummeled by guards for several days, could no longer bend... Several hours passed before an emergency room doctor finally saw Mr. Dilawar. By then he was dead, his body beginning to stiffen. It would be many months before Army investigators learned a final horrific detail: Most of the interrogators had believed Mr. Dilawar was an innocent man who simply drove his taxi past the American base at the wrong time."

At least four detainees have committed suicide at the torture camp created by George W. Bush after 9/11 at Guantánamo Bay. 25 more made 41 unsuccessful attempts to kill themselves. The conditions of their confinement—ordered by Bush and his Principals—constitutes torture. It no doubt prompted their deaths.

If George W. Bush was an ordinary citizen, there can be little doubt that he would face a long prison sentence for the scores of acts of torture he authorized both specifically and generally. Four of the seven white hillbillies charged with the kidnap-torture of a black woman in Logan County, West Virginia are now in jail for at least the next ten years.

If Bush weren't president, he would face murder charges. The maximum sentence in a federal murder case is death. If Bush and his co-conspirators are not above the law, if the United States remains a nation where all citizens are equal, they must be arrested and indicted. But by whom? The Supreme Court has never resolved the question of whether a sitting president can be arrested by civilian authorities. Even if he were charged and convicted, many legal experts say he could issue himself a pardon.

However, leaving the presidency in the hands of a self-admitted torture killer is unacceptable. Congress could ask a US Marshal to arrest Bush as part of impeachment charges. But the ultimate outcome—removing him from office a few months before the end of his term—seems woefully inadequate given the nature of the charges. In any case, Democrats have already said that impeachment is "off the table."

Bush could be extradited to one of the countries where the torture and murders were committed—such as Afghanistan or Cuba. But he could claim immunity as a head of state.

There is, however, a person who could begin holding Bush and the others accountable for their crimes. She is Cathy L. Lanier, the 39-year-old chief of D.C.'s Metropolitan Police Department. Chief Lanier, take note: you have probable cause to arrest a self-confessed serial torturer and mass murderer within the borders of the District of Columbia. He resides at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Go get him. History is calling, Chief Lanier. Your city, and your country, needs you.

I have always found it interesting to hear about how people get interested in punk rock. There is usually some very revealing story behind it. Frequently it also seems to vary from person to person and from generation to generation.

I got into punk via the metal route. This seems very common in people my age who got interested in punk around the late-'80s or early-'90s. Either around the time of grunge or alternative or just before it, metal was a close corollary to punk. I think the whole crossover thing had a lot to do with it, obviously. I initially was into what seems to now be called hair-metal, that is to say Motley Crue, Poison, etc. Yeah, and by the way, that was lame stuff, I don't take pride in having been a fan of that crap! A lot of people, even in the punk scene seem to be pontificating about how awesome glam metal was and even go so far as to buy these bands old records. Lest we forget guys, that this shit SUCKED! I was there to see it. Fuck, I saw Ratt, LA Guns, etc., live and it was maybe fun but the whole scene surrounding it sucked. I think some of the younger punks who think it's "funny" to listen to these bands don't realize that.

So, of course at a certain point I tired of the glam metal stuff and got into Metallica, Testament, etc. I began to see t-shirts with the coolest skull logo I had ever seen—yes, the Misfits. I found *Static Age* at a record store

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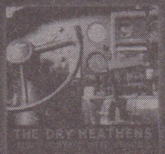

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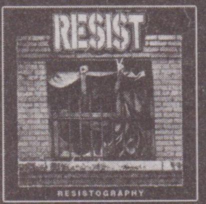

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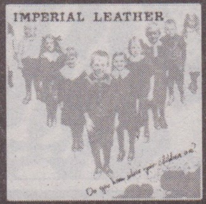

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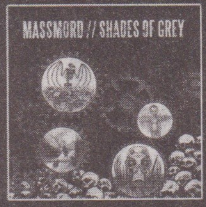

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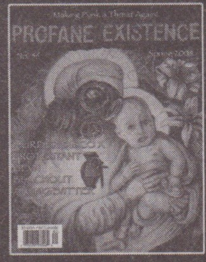

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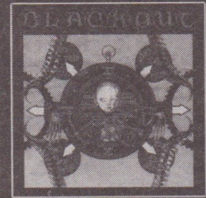

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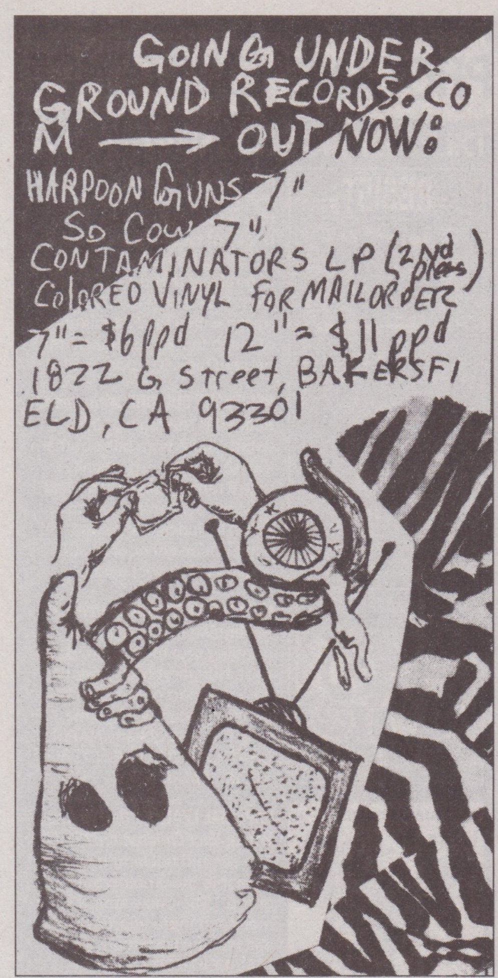
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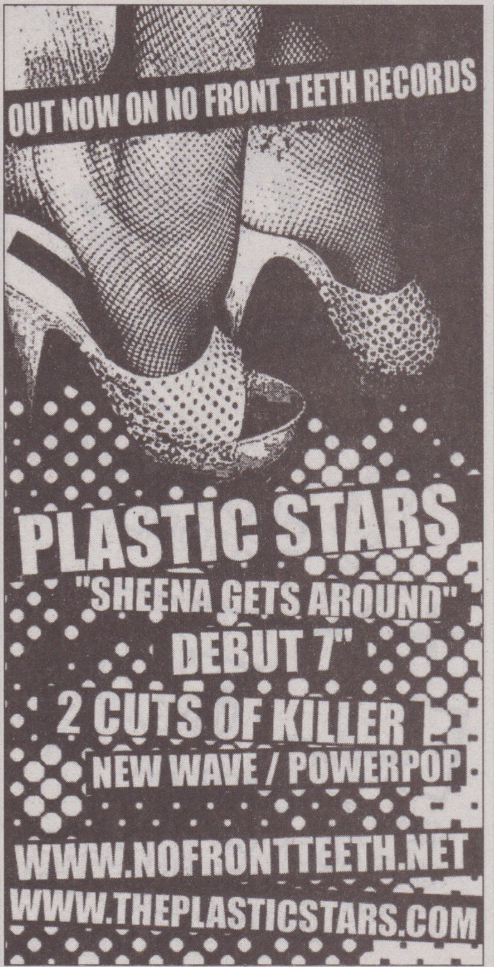
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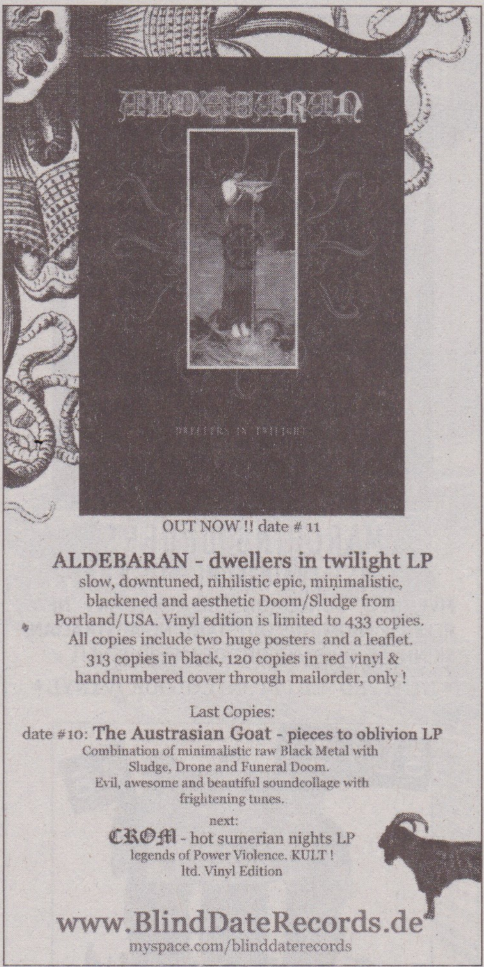
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and was compelled to buy it because the cover was so friggin' cool. I was blown away, and to this day the 'Fits are my favorite band. Other stuff quickly followed: Samhain, The Germs, Black Flag, The Damned, Fear, Sex Pistols, The Exploited, etc. This was pre-internet so I had no idea that punk still existed. I figured this was an anachronistic interest, which did not connect to any current music scene. Although it was pre-internet, there were BBS's, which is dating me severely I realize. I ended up drumming up an online friendship on a Chicago area BBS with a guy named Rich who was very involved in the Chicago area HC scene (he is Tony Victory's brother and ran a club, zine, label, etc.). I have lost touch with him but if you're out there Rich thanks! And Rich told me that punk still exists, and that there is a magazine called *Maximum Rocknroll* that is all about it. It took me a while to find it, but I did. It was a whole world being opened to me. All these ads for this cool stuff I had never seen, articles on stuff I had never heard of. Zines! I sent orders out in the mail that very day for all kinds of zines, records, and info. The rest is history.

The metal route really was very common in my day, which I think also distinguishes my generation from others. I think a lot of us felt like metal was cool, but was also alienating. I felt dreadfully out of place among metal fans in that era which was especially glam oriented, mainstream, ignorant, and redneck-y. This has changed to some extent. But if you were at metal shows during that time period you know what I mean. So there was definitely a side door in the metal fan arena for people who were uncomfortable with that to get interested in punk.

Of course a few years after I got interested in punk there was a mainstream blitz on punk rock. After Nirvana and the whole alternative (so called) thing started people became very interested in punk. There were punk-ish bands on the radio and MTV and Green Day and so forth, created the sort of pop-punk avenue. Then Hot Topic. So that was really a vast audience and very strange for me to see especially after I had just gotten interested in punk, which I found actually quite difficult to find out about and then everybody and their brother were then interested in it! I won't be bitter about it, although at the time I was! The good thing is that I do think there were a number of cool people who became involved in the DIY punk scene because of it and it was a good gateway. There was the obvious downside many of us remember in the form of idiots flooding gigs and lots of fashion punks. But I won't dwell on it. There are plenty of very active people in our scene now who found out about punk from the Green Day route if that is what you want to call it.

There are a few other notable ways I have seen. One would be the "older brother/sister" route. This is where you have a sibling that is into punk, generally older, that rubs off on you. This is quite common it seems to me especially in big cities.

Also there is the 'born misfit/rebel" types who simply never fit in and seem intrinsically attracted to anything rebellious or countercultural and punk just comes along as one of those things.

Another would be the "friends" route, which seems common in kids who are skateboarders or who have had long-time friends who get interested in punk.

Another would be the "political" route, which from what I can tell is quite uncommon, but is still worth mentioning. Some people into radical or revolutionary politics discover the more political end of punk appealing and get into it that way.

Another that I have seen is the "homelessness" route for lack of a better term. Some kids I knew in high school who became homeless for various reasons surprised me by getting into crust punk because people they associated with while living in squats or whatever. I found this route interesting but not all that common. Less common is the punk barfly route or partier route where someone ends up interested in punk because they have partied with punks.

To me, it's interesting to think about this stuff not because I want to draw divisions in people or anything like that, but because everybody has a unique and cool story of how we end up involved in punk rock. It doesn't matter that much how you get interested in punk really, there are plenty of active people from all these routes. Usually people fall in one of these categories but occasionally someone will throw me a curveball and it will end up being something different which I find fascinating. One I heard recently is someone stole a backpack and found a bunch of punk tapes in it.

This last month has been insane for me with travel, work, and life otherwise. Sorry to people waiting to hear back from me. I need to get my shit together, I know!

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The only spam I get is prescription drug related and I don't even know what the drugs in the email titles are or what they do. Cialis. Cialis. What is this. I don't want to know. Cialis. Cialis. A week or so ago I saw Thrones play in SF—Joe Preston; bass scientist, technician of tension. When I was 13 I saw Melvins support Nirvana, and it kind of changed my life. Joe played bass. but I did not know this then. I only remember their hair cuts and the feel of the bass on my skin—total second layer of epidermis, and noise so harsh and all emcompassing it would have crumbled coliseums. It definitely made me reconsider the Sid Vicious bootleg t-shirt I was wearing because Melvins were way better than "My Way." I Got kicked in the face in the pit and had my life changed, and thus went out and got the 1st Melvins record I could find, the one with the Flipper and Alice Cooper covers on it. Such a rager. The first time I saw Thrones I tried to convey to Joe the effect this show had on my brain and demonstrated the true fixated nerd that I am. He still remembers me from this conversation even though that was probably ten years ago. Jeez. Anyway the new Thrones set is like a birthday pony ridden through the post-apocalypti-tundra. Or more like a birthday without the pony, a ride without the post-apolcalyptic-tundra, or maybe actually no birthday, no ride, no pony, no tundra. Maybe if you know about cialis? Cialysis. Cianalyse it.

Next month you will see my name in the coordinator section of the masthead because I am taking over from Martin as distribution coordinator. If you work at a record store, skate shop, zine store, art 'n' craft empire, info shop, squat gas station, tattoo shop, distro hovel, etc, etc then you should totally start carrying *Maximum Rocknroll*. It's the magazine for shitty thinkers, indifferent ragers, political gas attacks, and you. Carry it. No but seriously duds email me here: layla@maximumrocknroll.com if you can think of a store or distro that would be interested in carrying the mag. I have been training under the watchful eyes of Uncle Mar and am really looking forward to taking over in July. If you live in the SF/Bay Area and would be interested in helping out with shitwork contact us, poser. There are some vaguely exciting things happening in terms of what I will be doing with the magazine, with which I will need help, and also we always need people to do shit like green tape, pick up the mail from the PO box, and other equally fascinating tasks.

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In the midst of all of this I had to fly to England on two days notice to deal with Some Family Matters. I took the opportunity to bring home my early-'90s hip-hop tape collection (Raekwon! EPMD! Many others!), find an OG copy of Wipers Youth of America for £5, and go see an exhibition of May '68 posters from the student/worker Paris uprising. Last time I was there it was because my mum wanted me to clear out my record collection from my teenage bedroom, so I mailed

about 2000 LPs and 7"s to SF and sold the rest at random record stores where people kept telling me that no one was buying vinyl in the UK anymore, which struck me as strange. It seems like 2nd hand vinyl is the one thing that would still sell, if only to nerd-collectors, now that CDs have been devalued by the MP3. I guess the UK is bereft of old vinyl obsessives? Though having seen Fat Bob from Hard Skin's record collection I am not sure of the truth of that statement. I found that Wipers LP in the "White Stripes/Garage revival" section of the record store that someone from Swell Maps used to work at, which is kind of inexplicable. The catagorization that is. Garage revival?? Jeez. Also the New Model Army records were in the *crust*" section of the record store, along with a bunch of dodgy spiral-tribe, techno dreadfuls. Can the punks please stop liking this shit-system of a band? They had their own brand of fucking clogs! *Clogs*! No! I saw many records I would have picked up if the dollar hadn't been so worthless. Seeing an old insane looking early-'80s comp LP with a bunch of classic *Messthetics* bands on it including The Tronics, for £30, which worked out at $60 for me, was a total bummer. Also there was an article in the listings section of the *Guardian* newspaper about Jay Reatard, which claimed he was in a long line of American Hardcore heroes such as Fucked Up. Really?? English people and their genres.

Other bummers:

1. The shambolic indie revival. Chapel Hill part V. Make it go away.
2. Minimal Techno
3. Hippie dad-rock jam revival music that just sounds like late-'70s AM rock. At least channel Roky/Skip Spence rather than genetic rock millionaires.
4. The word "chill" used in contexts such as "we had a chill time," "it was chill," "he's a chill dude," etc, etc. Also chill-out music as a genre.
5. "Punk" bands or bands with ex-"punks" who play shows/events sponsored by Nike/PBR/whatever. Also Nike's new subliminal "unbranded" advertising.

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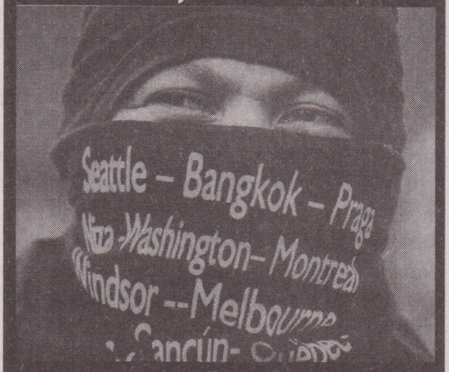
Top tenned:

1. Venom P Stinger – Live LP
2. Kikeiji – "Plastics Love"
3. The *Lowrider* mag from '82 with the Brat on the cover
4. Punk style from East LA in that era
5. Julien Stranger's part in the *Reason for Living* vid.
6. Can – "I Want More"
7. *Jay Boy* by Kent Sherwood/Glen E Friedman. Pre-Dog Town Jay Adams...
8. Subculture – *I Heard A Scream* LP
9. Shitty Laddes
10. layla@maximumrocknroll.com or whatwe wantisfree.blogspot.com

Go Team, Smash State!



"Lefty" Hooligan • What's Left?

I strained my neck the first time I visited New York City. Walking around Manhattan, craning my head looking up at the surrounding skyscrapers in the mid-80s, I was properly awed by the city's architectural display of power. And, I was reminded of John Lennon's reply to the question of why he chose to live in New York. It's the center of the empire.

But the empire ain't what it used to be.

The 5-12-08 edition of *Newsweek* excerpted a long piece from free market fundamentalist Fareed Zakaria's new book *The Post American World* in which he argues that the world "has shifted from anti-Americanism to *post*-Americanism" with "the rise of the rest," meaning the growing economic prosperity of countries like Russia, China and India. This has not meant challenging the United States militarily, but rather the claim that the rest of the world has "moved on, and [is] now far more interested in other, more dynamic parts of the globe." What Zakaria is talking about is economic, social and cultural dynamism, not military might. "America remains the global superpower today, but it is an enfeebled one." In New York, the imperial city *par excellence*, this shift is perhaps best symbolized by the destruction of the World Trade Center, at one time the world's tallest buildings. As Zakaria points out, "[t]he world's tallest building is in Taipei, and will soon be in Dubai."

In watching *The Visitor*, a current movie set in Manhattan partly about the human consequences of US immigration policy, I was impressed with how damned good New York's skyline looks without the twin towers, as seen from the Staten Island ferry. I admit to sharing the prejudice of many of my New York friends who considered the World Trade Center a blight on Manhattan. Not to say that I reveled in its destruction, nor should my anti-WTC remarks be construed as any kind of anti-urbanism. I'm a city person. I love city living, and I think that cities are potentially one of the most brilliant expressions of human activity. There is a character and life to any world-class city that is memorable. There is a grace and, dare I say, virility to the Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building that was completely lacking in the twin towers. The World Trade Center was brutal and ugly. New York City looks so much better without it.

Speaking of world-class cities, lately I've been jonesing for Paris, more so than New York. I've visited New York over a half dozen times, the last trip five years ago, so the city feels like an old friend I haven't seen in a while. I was in Paris three years ago, and only for my second time. That city has the feel of a still mysterious lover.

City of love, city of light, Paris is hauntingly beautiful. I'm attracted to the millennia of history captured in its layered architecture, the vitality of both its public spaces (parks, concourses, squares) and its public life (open-air markets, frequent holidays, political demonstrations), the generous slice of western civilization contained within its museums, libraries and universities, and the sensuousness of daily existence—the appreciation for food, wine, leisure, beauty, sexuality—among many other things. Paris seems capable of passively defeating those who would change it for the worse, from outright enemies like the Nazis who were unwilling to burn down the city in retreat, to the French themselves like that American wannabe Sarkozy who tried to repeal the 35-hour work week and make the French work harder. The meteoroic fall of Sarkozy's popularity, along with his reform plans, is particularly gratifying.

This doesn't mean that the "Spirit of 68" is alive and well in Paris. A 4-19-08 *BBC* broadcast of From Our Own Correspondent entitled "Visiting the Ghosts of Paris 1968," has the following observation: "The students had specific grievances in 1968 as well, notably against the rigidly hierarchical way the universities were organized - but they went on to believe they could change France, if not the world. A teacher highlighted the difference for me: 'This generation doesn't want to change society. They just want to be able to get a job good enough to pay the rent and that's why they're worried about the quality of their education'." I admit I was enamored with the city's revolutionary mystique, fostered from 1789 through the 1871 Commune to May-June 1968. I made sure to visit the Butte-aux-Cailles district that, with the Latin Quarter, was the location of some of the fiercest fighting between students and police during 1968. It was also one of the strongholds of the Paris Commune, and I bought a commemorative t-shirt from an office/library/social center there dedicated to preserving the Commune's memory. As of 2005, the Butte-aux-Cailles was being rapidly gentrified, with little resistance from anybody.

Regrettably, circumstances prevent me from vacationing in either New York or Paris

any time soon, so I'm enjoying my own world-class city, San Francisco. Often referred to as "the Paris of the West," San Francisco does have a certain charm, with its Victorian and Edwardian architecture. Parts of it have the appearance of a lazy Mediterranean town, delicate whitewashed residences interspersed with trees covering the city's famous hills. Yet I thought my hometown looked shoddy and rundown both times I returned from Paris. There's an elegance and cosmopolitanism to Paris that makes San Francisco seem downright parochial, an impression accentuated by the city's relatively low urban density when compared to Paris, and especially to New York. I've had visitors from New York tell me that San Francisco isn't really a city, but more like an urban town. They walked among the modest skyscrapers of the downtown financial district, sniffed condescendingly, and explained that San Francisco couldn't possibly be serious about the business of being a big city without more tall buildings.

Unfortunately, that's going to change, and soon.

The current 550-foot height limit in the city was a reaction to the building boom of the late '60s and early '70s that saw the rise of the 779-foot Bank of America Building, and the iconic Transamerica Pyramid at 853 feet. In particular, the controversy surrounding the construction of the Pyramid produced a proposition to limit buildings to six stories in 1971 that was defeated, and a "compromise" 1972 urban design plan that capped downtown building heights at 700 feet. The subsequent rise of the financial district further fueled anti-height sentiment that culminated in the mid-80s with the success of Proposition K (1984), which prohibited towers from casting new shadows on existing city parks; another "compromise" urban design plan (1985), which capped downtown building heights at 550 feet but raised previously low heights south of Market; and voter approval of Proposition M (1986); which restricted new office buildings for ten years.

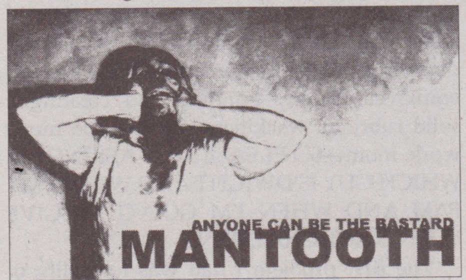
These modest successes signaled the eventual demise of organized popular opposition to downtown development forces. As is frequently the case with grassroots social movements, widespread interest and support could not be sustained, the ordinary people who participated went back to their very busy lives, and organizational and institutional gains languished in the wake of relatively incremental victories. What's more, capitalists are often capable of long range strategic planning and great patience, despite their impatience for immediate profits. In the case of San Francisco, downtown interests also waited out their progressive opposition.

The waters were tested in 2003 when the Planning Department rezoned Rincon Hill to allow almost a dozen towers to be built over 35 stories to increase downtown residential density. The 641-foot One Rincon building is scheduled to open this year, with two more on the way. City officials approved a redevelopment district around the Transbay Terminal in 2005 that permitted six residential towers of 35 to 55 stories on land once covered by freeway ramps. These towers will rise from public land sold to raise money for rebuilding the terminal. "The notion of extra-tall towers also is the culmination of efforts since the 1980s to shift the focus of downtown development - taking growth pressure off neighborhoods such as Chinatown and North Beach and steering it south of Market Street." This, according to a 4-27-08 article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* entitled "Reaching for the sky South of Market." In 2006, Planning Director Dean Macris came out in favor of extremely tall towers in the Transbay Terminal area. A year later, the winner of the Planning Department's proposal competition for the Transbay site, Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects and the Hines development firm, recommended a 1,200-foot tower. And in May of this year, the Planning Department proposed new zoning in the terminal area that would once and for all overturn the 550-foot building limit.

One Rincon Tower did generate a measure of concern and complaint, but nothing compared to the opposition provoked by the Transamerica Pyramid. "The anti-height fervor downtown quieted in the 1990s," the Chronicle article states. "[A]nd there's been little controversy about the towers erected during the past decade along Mission Street." This is due, not merely to the ability of capitalists to wait out their opponents, or the inability of those opponents to build a lasting resistance movement, but also to the changing demographics of San Francisco in the intervening years. Much like Manhattan, San Francisco has become home to the well-to-do and rich, with poor folk shunted to the margins, and middle class families no longer able to afford to live in the city. A demographic with little interest—class interest, that is—in fighting the Manhattanization of San Francisco.

Me, I'd like to see San Francisco shed its roll up the sidewalks at 11 pm provincialism. But I would rather see the city emulate Paris than New York. For one, this is earthquake country, with a big shaker due any time now. Do you want to be a thousand feet in the air when the ground starts to really rock and roll? For another, the proposed skyline, particularly with the Transit District towers (see sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/planning/City_Design_Group/CDG_transit_center.htm) looks more like *Blade Runner* than Manhattan. They make the old World Trade Center look positively enchanting.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, End Time, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called Fim in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hool-igentsia@mac.com.



It was one of those jobs where you find it impossible to describe to anyone who asks you "where do you work?" because you find yourself at a mental roadblock of potential references to Fuck On The Beach that your acquaintance might not understand. Furthermore, you fumble over your words in a feeble attempt to capture just the sheer weight of the importance of *your job*. Like most jobs, it's a largely thankless job where all the responsibility comes down on you and consequently inversely proportional to your paycheck. Restaurant work is perhaps the most grievous insulter in this regard; the long hours combined with the amorphous pile of day-to-day bullshit seems to break the laws of arithmetic (the laws of which are admittedly unknown to me since I am a firm believer that math is for fucking stupids). 1 + 1 rarely equals 2 when you're working in any realm of a restaurant because restaurants are black holes of humanity, where reason and logic are bent and warped. It's where human souls are sucked out in a frighteningly Shang Tsung/*Mortal Kombat*-way until you are no more than a wiggling nub of gristle on the kitchen floor. And your pay fucking sucks. I mean, c'mon—THIS IS AMERICA!!! LAND OF THE MOTHERFUCKING FREE!!! Thank god I just got stimulated with some George Bush tax rebate.

I spent the last two years toiling in the bowels of a restaurant as a manager, cook, janitor, babysitter, genetic engineer, shoe cobbler, botanist, and, on the last day, "that guy who pulled his balls out and gave someone 'the brain.'" But I threw it all away! I quit to pursue a made-up sounding job as an *academic advisor at an online university*. The duties and tasks of my job are fairly boring, so feel free to imagine my responsibilities akin to something you'll find at, say, a *D&D* game. The other day I met this level-five Accounting Wizard on the Astral Cube-Plain where he cast a spell over my COS reports, but it's cool because I leveled up beforehand. If it wasn't for a Tech Support Yugoloth interfering,

though, my Charisma levels might have taken a major hit etc., etc.

Anyhow, it's been somewhat of an uneasy transition between life in the kitchen and life in the office. For the first few days, I was lead to believe that I had to create a character profile of everyone in Cubeworld that assesses everyone's likeness to people from the TV show *The Office*. This proved somewhat daunting as there are several hundred employees in my building and creating a solid rubric of wackiness was just too much work, mom—SO PLEASE STOP ASKING ME WHICH GUY IS DWIGHT AND WHO IS MY PAM AND WHEN I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU GRANDCHILDREN.

The first problem I had was formality of office life—in the kitchen you could tell a coworker that "this dick isn't going to suck itself," if they gave you the slightest guff and no one would bat an eye. I suppose it would not be "OK" or "appropriate" to respond to some middle-aged lady showing me cat videos on Youtube with the Jerk-Off motion. Likewise it would also (probably) be frowned upon if I took a eight-gallon stock pot (in this case maybe a filing cabinet) and threw it full force across Cubeburgh at my boss for no other reason than I just didn't like the look on his face.

I'm also sitting on my stupid butt all the live-long day. Up until this point, I felt like I was standing for two years straight. I'm not sure whether or not I will gain or lose weight because 1) my movement is restricted to the innards of a 6x6' pen, but 2) I am not constantly eating. And while I care about my appearance as much as I care about "wiping properly," the men in my family have a terrible affliction when it comes to weight gain. We generally do not gain any weight on our arms or legs or booty. It just seems to move straight to gut. My uncles all look like the covers of '90s crust records with all those starving children with bloated stomachs covered in flies and being preyed upon by vultures.

But the only thing that I will probably miss about working in a restaurant is that I don't get to wear a chef coat all the time. I'm not sure if this is a well-known fact, as I am not a man knowledgeable of well-known facts, but *the chef coat* grants total immunity to whomever is wearing it. It gives you total clearance to any restricted or private place. In many instances, it will give you *carte blanch* for committing any act of degeneracy in public. It has this power for a few specific reasons:

No one ever questions a chef. Apparently a chef is a respected and hardworking member of the community. If you see someone walking down the street wearing a stupid chef coat, it must mean they are working hard and being respected. Why else would they be wearing a chef coat? In fact, what if you two are going to the same place? No one wants to possibly fuck up their chances of getting a meal or, even worse, having the chef wring out his scrotum over your dinner. Thus, if you are wearing a chef coat, you can more than likely walk into any building at any time of the day. You could walk into a bank's vault and start clearing it out and no one would say a word to you because no one wants to stop a chef from creating a MASTERPIECE of culinary GENIUS. And how would they know that you're not? Are they wearing a chef coat? Do they know how to cook fucking food?

Likewise, if you were walking down the street in a chef coat, you could freely slap the shit out of any motherfucker you pleased and they would not fight back. They do not want to mess up their chances of getting a sick recipe from your chef ass. Plus, what if they hurt you in such a way they you could not prepare food and CHANGE PEOPLE'S LIVES? Their thought process would be as such: "I'm going out to dinner tomorrow and I accidentally fuck up this Chef's hand, he might be the Chef at the restaurant I will be dining at and I will not be able to enjoy a proper meal because he will not be able to perform his job at 100%. But more importantly he might drizzle his ball sweat all over my meal and I will be in worse straits than I am now so I better just keep letting this dude in a chef coat slap me silly."

Furthermore, every other dickhead thinks they're some kind of "foodie." At the very least, I think most people would describe themselves as a "big fan of food" because you need food to live, idiot. A dude in a chef coat is kind of like a pornography director or even a pornography actor/actress to a "foodie." When I'm wearing a chef coat, I turn into a guy that exists in a realm that helps you get through the day. In this case it's by providing food to the masses instead of fervent masturbation material.

This can be a double-edged sword, though, as you will attract more attention than you probably desire, being that you are wearing a chef coat for dubious reasons. These people will want to talk to you about your latest "dishes" and "creations." Fear not! You can literally tell them anything you'd like and they will act like this is the most delicious thing they have ever heard in all their pathetic lives.

"Well, hello Mr. Chef! Seems like you're trying to get into my car! No need to use that brick. Here, let me unlock that for you! You must be on your way to your busy restaurant! Tell me, whatcha got cookin' tonight?" "Well, being that I am a Chef (because why else am I wearing this chef coat?), I plan on making a *flambé* out of my own turds and making a delicious *au jus* out of my own father's ejaculate. I will then garnish it with invisible fingerling potatoes that are actually human fingers but imaginary."

"OH WOW! SOUNDS SOOOOOOOOO GOOD!"

I was smart enough to snag a chef's coat before I left the restaurant, but if I hadn't, I would be stuck wearing "normal" clothes that don't let me do anything cool. If you were assaulted by some person wearing dockers and a button-up shirt, you would do your best to make sure that person's neck did not go uncut. Similarly, if I was wearing similar garb, I could not simply start serving myself at a bar and not pay for it. A move like that would get a guy murdered. But if you are wearing a chef coat, you're not just a guy, you're a fucking guy in a chef coat. Think about it.

ENDNOTES:
email me: gregory.mantooth@gmail.co

Made in Secret: the Story of the East Van Porn Collective, and Me

The first time I did porn I was 19, and I needed the money. I felt liberated about my decision, but doing the movie was awful and traumatizing really because they didn't tell me what they were going to do ahead of time. Just: will you bottom? Then they spray-painted my shirt, pulled my hair, and dragged me through gravel. I wasn't ready. I remember standing outside in the sun afterwards, and that familiar feeling of what just happened, holding my head up, and brushing everything aside. I didn't yet know why this was familiar.

The second time was maybe a year later, and it was worse because I was dealing with incest flashbacks so I told my boyfriend at the time—my first boyfriend—that I couldn't have sex for a while. Later, he called me from a porn shoot because the other actor showed up obliterated on drugs, so they had to send that actor home. Did I want to take his place? $250.

So there I was, with my boyfriend fucking me on camera. I was never very good at getting fucked because I got too scared, but there I was. Afterwards I couldn't come, which was required, and my boyfriend actually got frustrated and didn't hold me afterwards. I didn't know what to say, or how to say it—I felt like

he'd raped me. I mean, I knew I'd consented, but the money felt like coercion and his anger about something so unimportant made me feel so small.

Then, after I was a whore for five or six years I decided to try doing a video again. This time it would be hot, I convinced myself. $250 was an hour's work to me at that time, and not the whole day that a porn shoot took. Especially not the one where the director assured me that I could pick the guys, and everyone would be hot. He showed me some pictures. The guys in the movie with me were definitely not in those pictures. This time I told the director that I didn't get fucked but then I arrived and, sure enough, they'd planned the scene with me getting fucked. Luckily they handed me Viagra. The other guys had probably already been taking it for a while so it didn't do much for them. I ended up fucking both of them on a gym bench, but it wasn't hot.

A few years after that, by this time maybe eight years into my career as a hooker, it felt interminable. My friend Chris and I decided we would make porn because we didn't want to be hookers forever. We already felt trapped but once you've turned tricks for years it's hard to imagine getting a job that pays $10 an hour. You sit there all day, hate it, and get nothing. So we planned it all out. We were going to make unscripted orgy scenes on the beach and group scenes in public bathrooms, and we decided we wouldn't pay anyone less than $500, even though the going rate for things like that was maybe $100 or $200. We wanted to be fair. But then we thought through the financial situation and realized that, in order to pay what we thought was ethical and make the movies we thought would be interesting and hot, we'd have to spend more money than we thought we'd make. So we decided not to produce porn.

The hustler-to-porn-director trajectory is pretty familiar at this point, and generally it's a tragic tale where the hustler takes on the values of the trick—exploit exploit exploit. What a nightmare! So I'm glad Chris and I didn't make porn.

In *Made in Secret: The Story of the East Van Porn Collective*, one of the collective members says, "Porn is a word that makes people stop thinking—we're trying to be the opposite." Which is kind of beautiful, and so is this documentary, which follows a collective of white, twenty-to-thirty-something dreamers with screen names like Professor University, nerdGirl, Mr. Pants, and Monster that live in East Vancouver, British Columbia. These people are set on making movies where they cast themselves in their own sexual fantasies. Like *BikeSexual*, a polysexual romp about—yes, sex and bikes with a catch: they agree that the movies are only for themselves, and no one else can see them.

It's an intoxicating twist on the idea of process-oriented art, which usually dwells in the high art realm or the purely conceptual—still satisfying artistically, but lacking in political vision, except for the potential that the product becomes decentered or unimportant. With the East Van Porn Collective, a name under contention by at least one of its members (the one who I quote above), not only do the videos remain private, but they are hardly the point of this whole engagement that involves participants meeting at least once a week for several years. Certainly, everyone seems excited about making movies, especially with somewhat fancy equipment like a boom mike, but they are far more excited about their collective process. This becomes especially apparent in the final scene of the movie, which depicts a ten-hour emergency meeting of the collective, which is called to decide whether to show *BikeSexual* at a private film festival of like-minded DIY pornographers in Portland, Oregon. Even though all movies will be burned at the end of this festival, celebrating a similar ethic of privacy/exclusivity to that of the East Van Porn Collective, this would still be the first public foray for one of the collective's movies.

And, yes, I did just say ten-hour meeting. As someone who's been involved in a number of direct action activist groups working with a consensus process similar to that of the East Van Porn Collective, I've certainly participated in my share of interminable meetings. But ten hours? I hope I'm accurate when I say: never, please never!

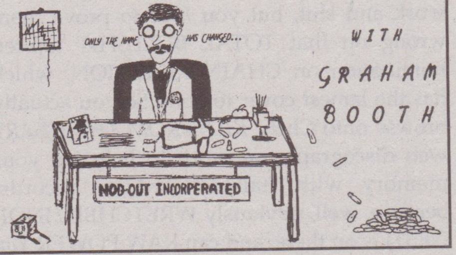
The meeting is called when one member of the collective doesn't want the movie screened, and I couldn't help cringing when various other members try to pressure her into consent. First by saying she wasn't even in this movie, so shouldn't she sit out the decision? Then, by saying well, am I correct in assuming that everyone else is in favor of showing the movie at the film festival? This exposé of power dynamics within consensus process is the core of the movie, and I can't say that I've seen this portrayed so clearly, honestly, and intimately before. In the end, the collective decides not to show *BikeSexual* because they don't have consensus (remember, everyone has to agree!), and instead they decide to show the movie someone is making about their process (oh, that's the movie we're watching!). And that's where the politics come together so explosively with the process, which isn't only the process of making art, but the process of their relationships and their political, emotional, cultural, and sexual engagement with the world.

I'll admit that I don't entirely relate to this cast of eloquent and excited, yet surprisingly awkward and shy characters. Their expressed faith in DIY cultures is stunning when juxtaposed against the awful hierarchies, scenesterism, and exclusivity so rampant in many of these cultures. A few collective members are so intent on making a movie that is "sexy," as if this is some sort of absolute. In one scene, a guy who claims he has never kissed anyone he wasn't in love with (so far only women) gets all nervous about making out with another guy, who has also never kissed a guy. In another context I might think "oh no," the lefty bi-curious set, please—but then they kiss, and it's so cute and sweet and. yes, sexy.

So I find myself inspired. Inspired because here is a group of people so excited about the potential of their own sexualities and the possibilities of a collective process of desire. I start to wonder what my own collective would look like—maybe not a porn collective but a collective of people (maybe fags, I don't know) trying to regain a sense of liberation and excitement in our own sexual lives. This personal project I've been working on, but so far it's remained individual (of course, I'm also editing an anthology titled, *Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots?*)—but what would this personal project about my own desires look like with a group of like-minded faggots (or whomever) committed to a collective process?

The expanded second edition of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* is finally out!!!!!!!!!!!! Get it while you can—the first edition sold out almost immediately after it was originally released at the end of 2004. Feel free to tell me what you think! You can also check in on me via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com. These days I edit reviews at the brilliant new feminist magazine *Make/shift*, where I also have a column, but only twice a year (that's how often the magazine comes out). I live for feedback, so send me love letters and/or delicious threats via my new homepage, www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.

ROCKET TO NOWHERE



Here's a novel idea: I'm going to write a column this month! (no pun intended) For the next 1500 (count 'em) words I am going to bury my complete and utter despair for life in a little ball deep within the depths of my stomach, and pretend I am your happy record collectro bro. Hey! IT'S ALL GOOD!

Seriously though, I have been in between bouts of major depresso lately, and for once in my life, buying records in my spare time DOES NOT MAKE ME FEEL BETTER!?! What the fuck! I guess it was bound to happen eventually. That doesn't make it suck any less though. I mean every couple days I'll perk up and get stoked on some random semi-tepid record that I find, but it's those damned in-between-record-scores times that are really starting to get to me. Like, you know, "life.". That shit can really bring you down.

Say for example, you went to Amoeba on your lunch break one day, and picked some random box of 45s and flipped through it and you found a CRASH BOX *Vivi* 7" EP from Italy for $2.99, which was especially crazy because you've been collecting Italian hardcore records for ten years already, but you never bothered to buy CRASH BOX because it seemed "not-so-rare" and so second tier. But then you started getting worried because people started paying $100 for it, so you thought you'd missed the boat and then BAM! CRASH BOX *Vivi* in your hands for $2.99! Then you get back from lunch and immediately email your friends to brag about it, and they are kinda impressed, and kinda enamored, but also kinda, well, "CRASH BOX is *kinda* mediocre, but you know what record is like the best Italian record, or at least top-ten, is that CHAIN REACTION *Gabble* 7"," and you're like, "Oh, I had that CHAIN REACTION EP like five years ago, got it for like $6," and you kinda half listened to it one time and didn't remember anything remarkable about it, and eight months later you decided you needed cash and you purged it on eBay for like $35 and that was three years ago, long before anybody even heard of CHAIN REACTION besides being some bargain bin staple for the last 15 years, and like, was it really *that good*?! "Dude, that record is totally top-ten Italian hardcore," and then you're stewing over it for the next hour at work and people, you know, *have their eye on you* because you're always checking email at work and shit, but you *have* to prove them wrong on that TOTAL BULLSHIT top-ten nomination on CHAIN REACTION, which has the lamest cover to boot! So you actually browse onto Chris' *KILL FROM THE HEART* web discography at work to help jog your memory with Italian Hardcore records, because, well, obviously WRETCHED/INDIGESTI is on there, and can RAW POWER *You Are The Victim* LP, practically your all-time favorite hardcore record, be on this list, since it's an LP? And shouldn't this just be 7" EPs? So, I guess RAW POWER doesn't get a pass?

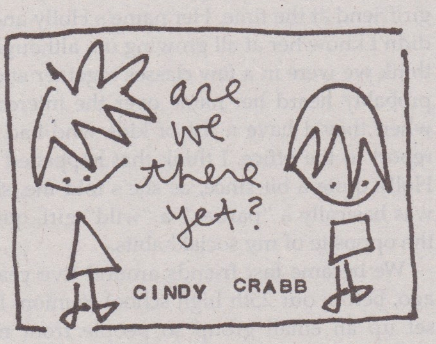
So then you start jotting down your master Italian HC list on a scrap of paper so it's not on the computer and all that...WRETCHED/INDIGESTI split 7", NABAT *Scenderemo Nelle Strada* 7", CANI *Guai a Voi!* 7" (Goddamn), SHOTGUN SOLUTION *Shotgun* 7", ROUGH 7", BASTA *Non Posso Sopportare* 7" (Wow, I didn't realize I like OI! that much), IMPACT/EU'S ARSE *split* 7", and then you start getting into less-charted territory since, well, top-ten lists are kinda forever, and you haven't listened to a lot of obvious records in over a year, so how can you remember whether the first CCM EP is tops or you think it's the 1st WRETCHED 7" EP that's better, or was it the second? And that UPSET NOISE/WARFARE split is really rare, but wasn't it kinda 'meh, and those peace punk dudes go crazy for BEDBOYS, but isn't it just like one song on there? And you never even got BLOODY RIOT, and people are always talking up that NEGAZIONE first EP, but it never really did it for you five years ago, but what about now? REIG is really rare, but prolly more obscure than good and what about RAPPRESAGLIA? You never got that, but PEGGIO PUNX, that is total gravelly piece of garbage noise and STIGMATHE is 'meh and what about all the Attack Punk records, and DECLINO is impossible to find but not so awesome, and obviously you're not going to be able to decide on a top-ten Italian hardcore list today and prove your friend that you shouldn't've sold that goddamn CHAIN REACTION 7". Fuck!

Or, say two weeks later, you're looking around eBay for the third consecutive hour on a given day, and, say, you spot a really poorly listed mega-rare UK punk single known on punk wantlists the world over as the MAG/SPYS / OBTAINERS split single. The kind of record from 1979 that features future members of THE CURE (yeah, *that* CURE), and is rumored to have been pressed in a quantity of just 100 copies. And say you write the seller and offer him 50 GBP to end the auction early even though you've seen copies of said record sell in the past for well over 500 GBP, and you're super anxious about it, and then later that night you see the seller ended the auction early, and then you wake up on Friday morning and the seller has replied "Yes, I will sell you the record for 50 GBP. What is your email and Paypal address?" even though he could've just replied to your email, and you scramble to respond ASAP so nobody else in the entire world spots the record and asks what happened. And then around noon on Friday you get his Paypal address and you send him money immediately, but know that the business day is already over in Germany, so he probably cannot mail the record out until Saturday, or more likely Monday, giving inquiring minds the world over three entire days to ask the seller what happened to the mega-rare pre-CURE 7" single, didn't you know it was by the MAG/SPYS / OBTAINERS and not some random "post punk" band, and well, I hope you got at least 200 GBP for it! And you asked the seller to email you when he'd shipped it, and he didn't, and you had to sit up through roughly ten days and sleepless nights waiting for the thing to come in the mail, and then it does come in the mail and you open it, and it doesn't have any stickers with it, as expected, but it does have a never-seen-before stamped sleeve with the release number *GLITCH 1* on it, which will go nicely with the copy of the record you already have with a sticker and insert. And then you listen to the record, because you remember when you listened to it the first time you had massive sticker shock after sacrificing a super rare Chicago '60s Garage 45 from Wilmette in trade, and you were more than kinda disappointed with the music, and you are actually pleasantly surprised because MAG/SPYS are actually a really good punky DIY/power-pop band with trademark "Killing an Arab"-era CURE slashing guitars (even though the MAG/SPYS guitarist wasn't the member to go on to THE CURE), and you start digging around online to see whether there are any documented stamped sleeves, and you can't find anything, but you do find some incredible scans of the release with various colors of stickers and read that it was only available via mailorder from THE CURE fan club in 1979/80, and among the tasty stickers is one for THE OBTAINERS who are not really a band per se, are not even really listenable per se, but they have a totally beautiful sticker with the record that you do not have so then you start feeling like, well, you are inadequate since you do not have THE OBTAINERS sticker, so *your copy is not complete, keep looking bucko.* And you can probably make a bunch of extra money selling off the extra copy, but it's only money that will probably just pay for a bunch more records that you don't really need, or you could just pay off your credit card (oh joy).

And say, a week later is a record swap, and your friend you usually share a table with is kinda stand-offish about sharing a table this month because he has too many records for you to fit on the table and you get grief but say, "I'm not going unless we're sharing a table because I'm already gonna be out $40 in gas just to get there," s so he reluctantly agrees but is kinda pouty about it. So you stay up until 2:00 AM the night before the thing sorting and pricing shit that's going to literally fly off the shelves and you go to sleep to wake up at 5:30 AM to get there by 7:00 AM but you accidentally fuck up your alarm and wake up at 6:30 AM and try to decide whether you're still even gonna go, and you reluctantly start lugging heavy fucking boxes of LPs out to your car and your friend calls all like "Where the fuck are you? Are you even still coming?" and you're like, oh yeah, I'm on my way now. And you get to the record show

around 8:00 AM and everybody has already gone through records and your friend is showing you stupid cheap shit he found like DEAD KENNEDYS *Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables* LP with ORANGE COVER for $8 and other crap that's like so *Punk 101 Average Joe* but easily sells for like $40-$50 and made his day worth the trip. Meanwhile, you're just lugging shitty LPs in the door and don't bother to even look around to buy anything because you have $11 cash on you, and all these other bozos walk up to you with stupid $1-$5 finds in your face that nobody in the world cares about *except* for you because it's some retarded synth-rock-wave record or crappy ska-punk crapola that only irks you because you paid *a lot more for them like two weeks ago*. And you open your boxes of crap to sell to the swarming masses, and they all make piles of 10-20 records and you're seeing "cha-ching," but then they start listening to every single record on a portable record player and they hand over the big stack, oh can you put that back and hand over a small stack to buy for $12 and after about three hours you have made $200 for sorting, pricing, and lugging *heavy* LPs around, and you are bummed because you have to move all that shit back to your car and house, but this month you don't even have time to look around and buy the screaming deals, so you literally go home with four shitty hair-metal records and $150 cash after you pay your $40 fees because your friend with all the records actually only sold $100 worth of shit this month. "So can *you* pay a little extra fees because I spent more money than I made (on a bunch of cheap shit I will make $300 on, including a goddamned LEGIONNAIRE'S DISEASE BAND *Rather See You Dead* 7" for $15!!!!)," and you're thinking, dude, I saved your broke ass today mister "I don't think there's enough room for you waah waah waah." And then you're majorly bummed 'cuz you never did get that LEGIONNARIES DISEASE BAND 7" when you lived in Houston for three damn years, but it's only a second pressing on Lunar Lab, so maybe you should just keep holding out for a first pressing on Disease Unlimited since you're not gonna get any breaks on it, why god!?

And say you spotted an early '80s Dutch hardcore EP that you'd never seen before by a band called NL CORRUPTION from 1983, and judging by the amount of want-lists you saw it on, you figured it must be a pretty good record, especially when it is entitled *Greatest Shit EP*, so you splurged more than usual on a copy since it's a "*definite sure thing total Dutch bonzer*," only to immediately have second thoughts, and you ask around and people are like, "Oh I heard that and it's not that good, like I would totally want it, but you know..." And then when you finally get it in the mail, you drop the needle and, in fact, it is just a so-so Dutch hardcore EP, and not some total mind-melting killer like AGENT ORANGE *Your Mother Sucks Cocks In Hell* 7" or ZMIV *Banzai* 7" or so many other awesome Dutch HC gems that NL CORRUPTION would never even almost make a top-ten list for. And since you actually like Dutch HC more than Italian HC, you can easily make a *top-ten Dutch HC bombers on the spot,* in alphabetical order: AGENT ORANGE *Your Mother Sucks Cocks In Hell* 7", BGK *White Male Dumbinance* 7", HOLLANDS GLORIE 7", NEO PUNKZ *Fascist Fuckerz* 7", PANDEMONIUM *Who the Fuck Are You* 7", PRIME MINISTERS *Society's Murder* 7", SQUATS *Noise Overdose* 7", SQUITS *Noise Against Silence* 7", SUSPENSE *Murder With The Axe* 7", ZMIV *Banzai!* 7", which makes you almost 100% stoked since you finally got that SUSPENSE and all you are missing is NEO PUNKZ, and because you like the Dutch *so much* you will even throw up a *top-ten Dutch KBD punk era monsters* in alphabetical order without duplicating any of the *HC bombers*: FILTH *Don't Hide Your Hate* 7", HELMETTES 1/2 7", IVY GREEN *self-titled* LP (since you covet this LP like a single!), MECANO *Face Cover Face* 7", MIRANDAS *For Promotion Only* 7", MORT SUBITE / SPOILERS *split* 7", RAPERS 7", RONDOS / RAILBIRDS *split* 7", SHITH *Suicide* 7", TROCKENER KECKS *Rik Ringers* 7". You should also throw in all SPEEDTWINS and an "*UTREG PUNX*" 7" comp for good measure and then you do a word count and you're actually at 2,379!!!! See you next month, I promise!!!



Ten things I've been thinking about

My favorite kind of punk singer is the kind of singer that rocks as hard as possible no matter what, and rocks with you instead of at you. Like Zach from We March. When he jumped off the little stage and into the four-in-the-afternoon punk fest beginnings, I couldn't help but sing along even thought I didn't know a single word. This is what it's about. Screaming together. Feeling part of something bigger. Bare arms touching. Teeth smashed by the microphone. Dancing.

Once we had a rule at our basement punk club that the audience had to sweat at least as much as the band did.

Funerals are for the living, not for the dead. Especially in white North America these days, we are so lacking tradition of what to do with death and how to mourn. I think it is really sad that so many people I know say they don't want a funeral or anything, nothing, no outsiders. But what I've seen is sometimes someone not touched by the death can lead the mourners through the beginning of the process of story telling and letting go, but when it is all up to the saddest ones to lead the ceremony, it can be too hard. No church makes sense, but I think there is something important about memorial, and about coming together with people from other parts of their lives—family, friends, real sharing of memory, real burying of the dead. Taking care of each other and sharing past experiences with death and how we pulled through. And seeing each other sad and celebrating and mourning, not just wasted. Not just pushing away. Not just alone.

What I've been reading: *Will the Circle Be Unbroken*, by Studs Terkel. *The Year of Magical Thinking*, by Joan Didion.

Once when a friend of mine's dad died, we started a little group; me and her and another friend of ours who had experienced a parent's death. At first I was afraid—there was something in it all that I didn't want to revisit. Like the shock and sadness would be contagious. But then she said, "I just want to be around people who know what it's like. We don't even have to talk about it." I remembered that feeling when my mom died; that I just wanted to be around people who already knew the feelings. In our little death group, we met at my house in the country for dinners, and we talked about our dead parents, and we talked about the details of loss and the annoying and disappointing parts of the ways other people deal or don't deal. One time Sarah asked what our dead parents favorite songs had been, and her mom's favorite song was a song I knew all the way through, "Alexander Beetle." We sung it.

Sing-shares. This is when you get together with your friends and people you are hoping to make friends with, and everyone brings a song they know, and copies of the lyrics, and then you all learn to sing these songs together.

Agriculture was invented not as a way to dominate nature and control human kind, but because cultivated foods taste pretty good (I mean, before they bio-engineered all the taste away), and half the time wild food tastes like dirt and grass.

Except I did go on this wild-food hike recently and ate the most beautiful almost all flowers salad, and all these weird and nice greens and crazy brain looking mushrooms, and it was so nice and I felt like a real shitbag for always making fun of wildcrafting. I

mean, it's actually really nice out there in the woods and there is something really good about learning to see. Starting to know the differences between plants and other plants. Eating a little clover looking thing that tastes just like lemon.

Cynicism and misogyny are not rebellious. It is no different from the fuckers who rule the world. This fake rebellion is just upholding the status quo.

Read On The Lower Frequencies, by Erick Lyle. (*SCAM*, *Turd Filled Donut*, and other really good writings)

SUCKERED

"I'd rather crawl through poison ivy or grab high tension wires / Cut my legs off at the knees or set myself on fire/Than have to feel your charms closing in around me / Or feel your slimy kisses covering my body / Your love is like nuclear waste / Your body is a danger to the human race / They should stamp contaminated right across your face / Your love is like nuclear waste…"

Those sensitive, tender lyrics are from the Tuff Darts' "(Your Love Is Like) Nuclear Waste." I'll spare you the lyrics about how the singer would rather stick his tongue into a fan, chew on razor blades, take Ex-Lax or give head to King Kong. You get the idea. It's off their self-titled 1978 LP, the best of a handful of worthwhile songs. Their original singer was Robert Gordon who later got into the rockabilly retread thing. I also just found out their guitar player Jeff Salen passed away earlier this year, which is a shame.

Anyway, it's a sunny May day and that song reminds me of sunny days in the spring of 1978, when I first heard it. My musical memories are often tied to certain periods, both good and bad. I played it on the radio show this week and it's also been pumping through my headphones frequently in the past few weeks. The irony about those words is they're accompanied by a bright, happy-sounding pop/punk melody—actually, Tuff Darts' sound was more pop/rock with a little punk sneer and rude sentiments but their anthem, besides this one, was a ditty called "All for the Love of Rock 'n' Roll," summing up their allegiance.

1978 was also the year I graduated from high school—30 fucking years (yikes!)—and those words make me think of my senior prom or, more accurately, of my date Susan. Except there wasn't any love in any way, shape, or form. This isn't going to be a sexist diatribe, more of a tale about being suckered. Thinking of that song makes me think of her and how badly that night went. Not anything tragic or traumatic, just irksome and emblematic of my extreme naïeveté at that point in my life and it wasn't the end of my naïeveté, either, but that's for another time. Actually, it's not.

This piece may bear some resemblance to a George Tabb autobiographical musing but I'm sure George was always a lot cooler than I was. 99% of the population was cooler than I was. This is a tale of how fucking pathetic I must have been back then—and how sad it is that I still think about it in my late 40s. Umm, we'll leave out that last part. "Nuclear Waste" is a childish put-down. I was 18 years old, unhappy about how that prom went, would sing that song and wonder why I *let* myself be suckered in the first place.

It's not a rare thing that the socially inept and maladjusted, freaks, outsiders, etc are drawn to punk. That was more or less the case with me, in retrospect, although the initial attraction was the music's aggressive nature. Maybe I didn't think of myself that way back then but it was definitely the case. Actually, I knew I didn't fit in but didn't see anything wrong with that. I still don't, to an extent. Also, the guy who got me into punk was kind of a "cool kid." Not a prep or jock but someone who had social acceptance, was already a DJ at a college station while still in high school, and hung out with a pretty hip crowd. I've become good friends with his girlfriend at the time. Her name's Holly and I didn't know her at all growing up, although I think we were in a few classes together and I probably heard her name over the intercom when they'd have a list of kids who had to report to the office. I think that happened to Holly quite a bit since, as she's told me, she was basically a "partier," a "wild" girl, quite the opposite of my social habits.

We became fast friends around five years ago, before our 25th high school reunion. I'd set up an email group so people from my class could re-connect and I'd talk about getting into punk my senior year and about Paul Greenberg a.k.a. Greeny being the guy responsible. It turns out Holly and I were at a lot of the same shows in the late '70s/early '80s, although she says she doesn't really remember details of many of the shows since she was usually in an inebriated state. She wondered why we never hung out back then, and I told her it was because the minute school was over, I'd go home, shut the door to my room, do my homework, and then listen to records while playing a game with my baseball cards or pool on my small-scale table. It's incredible how much we have in common—we're both progressive politically, like some of the same music, love the Red Sox, aren't too fond of the Yankees (her situation is complicated by the fact she's married to a Yankees fan and when the two teams play each other, they have to watch the games in separate rooms), and we both have something of a cynical outlook on things. On the surface, we both live conventional lives in the 'burbs. She's married, has two kids, and is an attorney. but she's still a consummate wise-ass, and hasn't had her spirit crushed, although she's certainly settled down since high school. I've attempted to bring her up to date on punk rock happenings and she liked the mix CDs that I made for her. She told me some amazing stories about what went on around that school and around town during those years—things of which I was completely oblivious.

In terms of a social life, I only had a few friends. I didn't have a ton of dates, either, although I saw one girl named Linda a few times. We actually met at our 9th grade dance. We both went dateless and I was sitting on the bleachers, chewing on a bourbon toothpick (some of the guys had taken to chewing on toothpicks that year. I have no idea where that started), and spotted Linda. To make it short, we connected pretty well at the dance (or so I thought). I went out with her a few times during my sophomore year and it basically didn't get anywhere, fizzling out some time during that year. If it *had* gotten anywhere I wouldn't have known what to do, anyway. I think I had one other date up until my junior year and, when it was junior prom time, I decided to ask this girl named Susan, who was in my English class. I don't even know why I did, because I was more interested in Ellen Stover (not the Ellen who became my wife) and Debbie Spencer, who I had a massive crush on, but neither were available—both had boyfriends. But Susan seemed kind of approachable so I figured why not. She accepted my offer and it went OK, but nothing that would lead to any sort of long-term romance. And we were a rather odd couple—I was a middle class Jewish kid and she was a rather well-off Irish Catholic girl from the rich part of town. Her old man was a real estate developer.

Anyway, forward to senior year—the year that punk happened in my life, for one thing. I had perhaps a *tad* more self-confidence. I did go out on one double date with Susan and her friend Sandy and another guy. I guess I didn't see this as a set-up for her roping me into taking her to the prom. Once again, she wasn't my first choice. I didn't even consider Ellen or Debbie, this time (incidentally, I did have one date with Debbie when I was in college and it was fun—she was a sweetheart—but, alas, it wasn't to be). two girls turned me down. One was my next door neighbor who I asked out at my mom's urging. I forget who the other

girl was. In any case, I was resigned to staying home. Then Susan called and asked if I'd take her… and that she wanted to go in a limo with Sandy and her date, which I refused to do because, damn it, I was going to drive myself to my fuckin' prom. That was in spite of the fact the limo would have been free. But I accepted her date request—which I never should have done. I'd have been better off saving the money to buy more punk records. I'd rather look at a bigger collection of Damned, Jam, Generation X, and other musical delights than look at my prom photos, especially with my white tux jacket and sheepdog haircut. Ehh… could be worse.

The worst part of the evening was actually before the prom. Well, the whole night was lame but Susan had a pre-prom party at her house. Two fucking hours of the *Saturday Night Fever* soundtrack. Yep, Susan was a disco lover. There's another reason why it could have never worked out. Actually, I take that back. My wife Ellen was and still is a soft rock lover and loathes about 95% of what I listen to. She does like some of the more melodic stuff I play and the older punk that I forced on, uh, exposed her to when we were first dating. But, after enduring the (with apologies to Crucifix) hellish disco inferno, we were off to the Danversport Yacht Club. Susan wanted me to have Sandy and her date follow us in their car. Well, I decided to have a bit of fun and try to lose them, which I did, and they almost got in an accident trying to catch up to us. I don't think Susan liked that very much.

I don't remember much about the prom itself, except that Susan didn't spend much time with me. When it was time to drive home to change for the "after prom," one of us put on the AM rock station and I had to endure more garbage—Cat Stevens and a really bad Rod Stewart song. When I voiced my objections, I don't think she was thrilled.

At that point I should have said fuck it and told her to have a good time at the after prom, but I decided to suck it up and once again try something to preserve my self-respect a bit. I brought my clunky tape recorder and put in one of my punk mix tapes. I played the Buzzcocks, Clash, and Pistols ("Satellite—an underrated song). Even with the four D-size batteries failing, it still sounded good to me. Not to her, of course. But that was the high point of the night—pathetic, eh?

The after prom was wretched. It was at a country club in Nahant owned by Billy Conigliaro, former player for the Red Sox. Nahant is a peninsula, connected by a long causeway. I was sleepy as hell and spent a good chunk of the night sitting at the table drinking coffee while Susan and Sandy were "truckin'," as they call it… dancing along to the canned disco music between sets from the covers band, which was a bit more tolerable. They played "You Really Got Me," at least. I should mention I didn't usually drink coffee up to that point in my life and it did a number on my stomach later on. I should also mention that you'll never guess who was at the same table—Linda. She'd been accompanied by a family friend, apparently. I didn't have any bad feelings towards, her, though. That was reserved for Susan.

So after all that, it was 5:00 AM and we were off to another girl's house for breakfast and to see off a classmate who was going off to basic training that day. It was *real* fun driving over the causeway half awake and in the fog. When we got to the house, it was at this point that my bowels basically exploded and I decided to go home. Susan didn't want to leave so I left her there. She seemed embarrassed when I tried to hug her good night or good morning or whatever. No kiss, no nothing. And another song popped into my head in the coming days, a classic by the Boys: *"You kiss like a nun... just like a nun, and it drives me crazy."* Actually, she didn't kiss at all. As for the nun part, there's a Catholic college across from where she lived and before our junior prom, we went over so the nuns could see us all dressed up. Maybe that was in the back of mind. Who knows. It's a good tune and the punk rock, as always, helped me maintain my sanity. Especially when I eventually realized I'd been used, hoodwinked, *suckered*. She wanted to go to hang out with Sandy. I almost wondered, in retrospect, if she and Sandy had been more than friends, although Sandy did get married later on. Nah, she just wanted a warm body to get her there. And I later heard the stories from Holly about some of the debauchery that had been going on behind the scenes there. That would have been more interesting, probably, and I might have found a more appreciative audience for my punk tape.

Interestingly (maybe), while I haven't heard from nor seen Susan since 1980, I've stayed in touch with Linda. She lives in Florida and is on her third marriage and has four kids. She's quite a character. She also calls me her high school sweetheart, which is very nice and we have a better relationship now than back then. She wasn't into punk, either, but I'd probably have been better off taking her to the prom. I might have even left the punk tape home.

Take my life, pl… oh, never mind.

MUSIC REVIEWS AND SUCH…

First of all, it's been four days and I'm still feeling the aftershocks of the SYSTEMATIC DEATH show in Providence, RI. The band only did five US shows (two of 'em in Providence) and they were absolutely mind-blowing. People traveled from all over the place to see what might be a once-in-a-lifetime event. Actually, I hope that's not the case but when the year-end list gets made, this show will most certainly be there. No going through the motions, no pose that needed to be crashed (apologies to GAUZE), just a throttling thrash assault powered by some shit-hot drumming. It was the first time I'd seen one of the "old guard" Japanese hardcore bands and these guys deserve their status. They did the shows with TRAGEDY and it was hard to believe that about one-third of the audience bolted before SYSTEMATIC DEATH played their set. Fucking *losers*! Partners In Crime Records (3213 NE MLK Blvd., Suite C, Portland, OR 97212, www.partnersincrimerecords.com) has released two double LP anthologies (four LPs total) of the band's recordings that includes everything they recorded (pretty sure) and there are a few unreleased tracks included. Some of the demo recordings are on the rough side but it's beautifully packaged in double gatefold sleeves and printed inner sleeves.

Continuing with some newer releases from HG Fact (www.interq.or.jp/Japan/hgfact), first up is the latest from BLOWBACK, a full-length CD called *Living Vibration*. A whizzle of feedback, a stomping intro and it announces their return. This is a savage musical attack. There are some immediate MOTÖRHEAD-isms at the outset of "Cut Off The World" and other rock-out moments but it's wrapped up in a full-on sonic nailbomb. It's relentless, pulverizing and whatever other adjective you want to attach to a band that has a huge, hard-edged sound. Searing leads, gigantic throbbing bass and vocals that sound as though the tonsils are about to burst. Yes, this is an exercise in hyperbole but it's the only way to convey BLOWBACK's sheer power. New stuff plus re-recordings of a few earlier songs.

Next is a compilation of 7"s from 2ND DEGREE, *Chain*, and it includes the songs from their recent three song *Tar 7"* and a re-recording of an older song, "Chain Of Rage." There's some power-rock on the newer songs (with a revamped lineup), but this band mainly have '80s-era European hardcore (UPRIGHT CITIZENS, et al) and UK-82 trappings—mid-tempo, catchy compositions with a gritty approach, plenty of vocal rasp, boys-in-the-gang backups, and razor-sharp riffs.

Tadashi from HG Fact doesn't only put out records from Japanese bands. He's also unleashed the latest from Portland's DOG SOLDIER, *At My Throat*. There are hellacious shrieks and screams to start things off here, appropriately titled "Chainsaw Intro," and I'm not so sure I want to know what's going on there. Crust metal, for want of a better term. Basically, it's crossover-style thrash metal with grunted, strangled vocals and somewhat echo-y production that brings Sacrilege to mind. One difference, though, is the brevity of the compositions. Pretty good,

although I liked the sharper, punchier production of the previous 12" on Hardcore Holocaust.

As always, there's plenty of thrashin' hardcore to write about. Motorchest Records (PO Box 725, Poplar Bluff, MO 63902, www.myspace.com/nocausepunk) has a new pair of 7" EPs. The first is *No Sleep* from GOD FODDER. Nice 'n' snotty, stripping it all down to its essence. These guys could be a Midwest counterpart to ACID REFLUX in the rant department with a bright guitar sound working in their favor. Succinct? How about, "Got no money, got no job, dress like a fucking slob," on "Dead Weight." Why get poetic when the direct route is more effective? There's not a lot more to elaborate on here, except that you have to manually remove the needle from side-one unless you want to be called a dumbass *ad infinitum*. Really—these kids today!

With THE CRUNKY KIDS' latest, *Hardcore Malarkey For Sure!!*, you'd probably guess that, with all the nasty vocals and dirty guitar/bass tandem, this is a Cleveland band and you would be correct. THE CRUNKY KIDS have been bashing things around the entire decade. If you need a pedigree, it includes BOMB BUILDER, 9 SHOCKS, GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, etc, etc, and the current lineup is a power trio with Thuggy Bearbomb, Wedge, and Matt Upstab. Thrash and pure punk rock coalesce into a formidable elixir, and they're sure pissed off about things, starting with a certain overseas military conflict and also taking time to comment on a poor Christian Scientist kid who died because of huge amount of fecal backup on "Shit Out The Poison." That could apply to what the band is doing here.

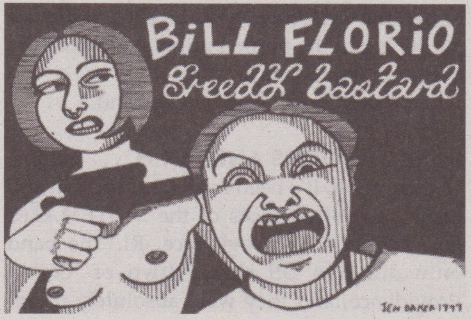
Another pair of 7"s, this time from Firestarter Records (2981 Falls Rd., Baltimore, MD 21211, www.firestarterrecords.com). I remember THE BREAKS being pretty good when they hit Boston with THE SPARK in '05. *... Are Broke* is a one-sided epitaph for this Midwest hardcore dynamo—five songs that were recorded at the same time as their previous 7". Plying the thrash in short, agitated bursts driven by hyper drumming and the requisite nettled vocals. There's not much to distinguish THE BREAKS from the endless parade of bands playing in this vein, but they do it right. A non-stop charge.

JEAN MILLS SOCIETY TORCH favors double-speed thrashin' for their *Start Tomorrow* EP, which was recorded in 2005 and is now getting a vinyl release. Some humorous and sarcastic lyrics—I like the sentiment about bringing back the previous *Headbanger's Ball* with *"the old days of AC/DC, Iron Maiden and Slayer,"* but, unfortunately, it's only fair-to-middling from a musical standpoint.

Next comes a split CD from Brazilian bands DFC and PRESTO? entitled *Inferno Na Terra* (Peculio Discos, CX Postal 393, Santos-SP, 11001-970, BRAZIL, www.peculiodiscos.com.br). Both of these bands have the crossover thing, to an extent. Hardcore 'n' thrash with a driving and a ruthless, murderous attack. Another commonality is the brevity of the compositions. As for differences, PRESTO? throws in some blastbeats , chuggier elements, plus slightly lower tunings, as well but it doesn't impede the power—but since DFC eschews those things, I like their half a bit more. I have to say that the sampling of the "1-2-3-4" from PANTERA's "Fucking Hostile" on one PRESTO? song is pretty damned clever, too. If you like metal in your hardcore or vice versa, there are worse ways to spend 24 minutes.

Also in a heavier vein, there's IRON LUNG's new one SEXLESS//NO SEX (Prank, PO Box 410892, SF, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com). This is death or, more accurately, IRON LUNG's latest opus is *about* death. Physical death, mainly, but also death of the soul and one could say those often go hand in hand. It's a hammer-shock musical effect, grinding out ultra-fast thrash and oozing slowdowns that are far from accessible or tuneful but appropriate for the mood, here. For a two-piece, IRON LUNG has a huge sound. The final track, the lurching "Cancer," ending abruptly with another blast, seems a fitting conclusion. Accompanied by haunting artwork from RUDIMENTARY PENI's Nick Blinko. I've never really been an aficionado of powerviolence (everyone who reads my stuff knows that by now), except when seeing it live., but this never gets completely out-of-control and one thing that stands out here are the Voivod-ish guitar touches, especially effective on a song like "Politics Of Science." Enough inventiveness and variety to keep it interesting. 625 Thrashcore has released a CD anthology of IRON LUNG EPs called *Life. Iron Lung. Death. + 17* but I didn't get to it in time for this column.

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 0190
email: suburbanvoice@earthlink.net
Sonic Overload radio: www.sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com



I realize that New York is a different place than where I grew up. It's "safer," whatever that means. But I think some of the old rules still apply. While I now see people comfortable watching a DVD on their $3000 laptop on a subway at 2:00 AM, where as I used to stick my $20 walkman in the bottom of my bag in fear of getting held up for it, (this never happened to me, but a friend of mine was held at gunpoint in broad daylight once for his CD Discman, so at least then it could happen. Anyhow, the point is, even though the violence thing is so remote now, you still don't want to look anyone in the eye, and you really don't want to bother getting into it with anyone. At least three or four times a week I witness some sort of hostile incident. No, I don't see the blood and guts anymore, except when a bike messenger gets nailed by a truck, but if you spend the hours on the subways and busses and side streets all the great New York-ness is still there. There's always that momma who decides that not only is she gonna park her huge fucking stroller with her fatass baby in it, she's going to scream at anyone who brushes up against it in a packed subway car. There's always going to be that guy that rubs up against people even if all the camera phones discourage him to whip it out as much. There's always gonna be the two deliverymen in the elevator who decide to start swinging at each other even though I'm mere inches away from the stray fists flying.

So while in my past column I seemed to imply that native New Yorkers are a dying breed, I was sort of implying it about the ones like myself. People who aren't total fucking pits of humanity, but those who appreciate watching the pits like some people enjoy standing on the edge of a volcano with a marshmallow on a long stick.

So anyway, while I don't look in their eyes, I do like to see what books they're reading on the subway. Remember, I'm taking the subway at 8:00 AM every morning from one edge of the Bronx to the other through Harlem and the Upper East Side, switching on a second train for five minutes with people from Flushing, Jackson Heights and Woodside. By the way, those places are in Queens, for some reason everyone from NYC is usually from one of the three boroughs, where as Manhattan is New York, New York, but for some reason Queens people say they're from the villages that made up Queens when it was just farmland and cemeteries. That's not true actually, people from everywhere in New York say they're from whatever neighborhood they're from, but for some reason the postal system lets Queens people get away with writing Forest Hills on an envelope, trump it up to homophobia, people being afraid to have anything to do with the word Queen.

So on the average rush hour car, I see maybe two novels by popular authors that probably started hiring others to write their

so-so novels years ago so they can crank out three a year. Nora Roberts, or Mary Higgins Clark, you see two overweight Hispanic girls reading thug romance novels with flames all over the side, you see two older guys smelling like the Budweiser and sausages they had for breakfast reading the sports pages in the *Daily News,* fifteen people listening to horrible '90s retro music and three morons with their mobile Play Stations or whatever the current handheld game is. I'm sitting there reading some 1200-page history book and people look at me like I'm the weirdo.

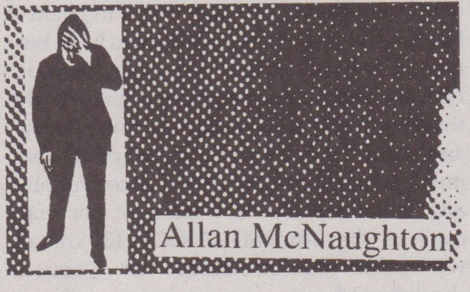
So, I'm reading a book, actually it's a Lawrence Block novel and this girl and her friend sit next to me. She's wearing sunglasses and is professionally dressed, and her friend looks like a big mushroom. She's got that don't fuck with me short Puerto Rican part time secretary who answers phones and files her nails all day, except when on a smoke break. So I'm reading a part in the book about a homeless dude who shot some yuppie on the street while having a Viet Nam flashback and all of a sudden I get hung up in this odd emotional conversation sitting beside me. It starts off with mushroom lady telling her friend that, "You make a lot of money girl, he can't take that you make so much more than he does, he's home half the day and can't stand that you have all this responsibility and can take care of yourself and you have to take care of him because he's always broke..." They go on and on and basically her boyfriend called her the day before around lunchtime and demanded that she come right home, and she hung up. When she got home, he and all of his stuff were moved out, without a word. Personally, after hearing the bit about how she was probably supporting him, I didn't really feel much grief for her, but what was truly amazing was her fat friend. She went on and on about how, "well, you know, you can never tell where your relationship will go from here. When my man got bored with me and starting cheating on me, we broke up for a while, but then I got him back and had these two kids." Then sunglasses went on about how she was an assistant to this woman, and the woman also expects her to walk her dog after work. She seemed anxious about asking this woman to walk her own dog one night so she can go to her broke boyfriend's mom's house and ask her why her son dumped her and took all her CDs.

It got me to thinking how some people let themselves be victims of the society around us. Sometimes people scold me for letting others take advantage of my efforts. Be it people I'm working for, or friends of mine. I can accept that, and I can admit that I definitely have let people hand me extra things to do. I can pass most of it off as being helpful or being a good friend or some other bullshit. What amazes me is how so many of those other people out there, and by other people I mean you're average fucking schmuck, that sits waiting in the next chair at the barbershop. That guy who thinks he has to make conversation yet suddenly gets stumped and weirded out when you converse back and don't just yes him. While in a way, I really don't give a shit about these plain yankeecandlecandlelongpoopinthetoiletstickingabovethewaterline people, I think you have to feel sorry for them. This girl is shit on every day by a loser boyfriend, an asshole manager and then her fat friend who already ruined her life with her own loser boyfriend that she had the nerve to squeeze out photocopies of, has the nerve to tell Miss Doormat that everything will work out and if she's lucky she'll end up fat and pregnant with a mushroom haircut and a nail file of her own, happily everly afterly scooping up her boss's dachshund poo while scheduling her spa visits and bailing her man out of Riker's Island.

People are losers folks, it's really good to observe them, and if it doesn't cause you to laugh, at least you know what not to do. Anyhow, on my way off the train I gave a baby stroller a nice swift kick and savored the angry mom's screams as the doors closed behind me.

Amen

bill@candids.com



I suppose it should come as no surprise to me at this point that whatever small element of danger or revolutionary potential that punk ever had is long gone, but every TV commercial or Hollywood soundtrack featuring the incendiary music of the late '70s serves as a fresh reminder that it has more or less become the classic rock for my generation. It was par for the course then when I was flicking through the TV channels the other night and came across a PBS fundraiser centered around the broadcasting of some recently released compilation of Clash performances called *The Clash Live: Revolution Rock*. For those readers outside of the USA (or without a TV), PBS is public television, funded by subscriptions and donations from the viewing public (as well as, increasingly, from corporate sponsorship). The channel usually features the kind of programming (documentaries, BBC costume dramas, etc) that lets smug middle-class people feel smarter and better than the kind of people who watch *American Idol* and *Survivor*. Their pledge drives are usually built around four-hour specials of the protest music of the '60s and shit like that. PBS is all about the '60s—most of their donations probably come from millionaire ex-hippies. At least, they *were* all about the sixties.

Picture the PBS studio, with its rows of phone banks for accepting donations, decorated for the evening with flashing police lights, camouflage webbing, and blown up Clash album covers. In between songs, the hosts encourage viewers to call in or go online to make donations of anywhere from $75 to $250. Guest "experts" have been called in to expound on how important the Clash were to rock history: hippie DJ Pierre Robert, and "rock critic" Alan Light (of *Spin, Rolling Stone, Vibe*, etc). The PBS host comes on to give us the hard sell. "As an intelligent person, you appreciate and enjoy all different kinds of music, and we're happy to bring it to you." In other words, the Clash are just one more group that can fit on the PBS viewer's CD shelf alongside other PBS-approved fare like Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, or *Buena Vista Social Club*.

The film itself is a mixed bag. Documentary sequences pair a clueless, sensationalist voiceover ("taking their name from the headlines of the day" ... "they changed the musical landscape forever") with the same hoary old recycled Don Letts footage you've seen a hundred times. Cue the banner being unfurled at Bond's in New York, then Joe Strummer with his ridiculous '80s mohican taking a photograph from the back of a convertible. Repeat ad nauseam. There are some cool performances though: what looks like a promo video from 1976, shot on a soundstage with amateurish lighting. Mick's out of tune, and the band performs intensely for the cameramen and probably a couple of mates. You can imagine Bernie Rhodes behind the scenes, exhorting his boys to give it all they've got; the band performing "Radio Clash" on the Tom Snyder show with a genuine NY graffiti artist getting up on the corrugated iron backdrop.

Don't get me wrong. I like much of the Clash's music and I think that Joe Strummer was a genuine and thoughtful man. But they were the first punk band to really milk the revolutionary posturing and political rhetoric of the early punk scene and turn it into a massive cash-generating industry. I'm not saying they didn't mean it, *maaan*... Just that whatever they may have "meant" was probably lost on the crowds at Shea Stadium.

I'm sure that the smiling happy TV presenters were/are fans of The Clash, as are probably a lot of PBS viewers, and obviously The

Clash doesn't represent the be-all and end-all of punk rock in any way whatsoever. The fact that someone at PBS thought this was a good way to raise money is another nail in the coffin for punk as a movement, for punk as something that stands apart from the rest of society. I've spent a large chunk of my advancing years feeling like an outsider, so it's weird when I hear the music that gave me something to believe in used to sell cars, cruises, retirement plans, or PBS subscriptions.

***

To contradict myself in the first part of this column, I'll go on record here as saying that the new "reality" TV show following NOFX on their recent world tour is one of the best shows currently on the box. The best part of the program is their manager Kent. He gets totally plastered all the time but still manages to string together a sketchy tour that takes NOFX to places around the world that most bands rarely reach. I doubt these guys could make it to the corner liquor store without Kent holding their hands. Well, actually, Fat Mike seems to have his shit together, but watching this I can't help thinking that the two guitarists are lucky they ended up getting into a successful band, because it definitely seems like their alternative would be flipping burgers. I mean, they've been playing for over 20 years, but in the first episode one of the guitarists has a problem with a pedal and basically just gives up, like he's helpless. I think what warms me to the show is that despite all their success, for the most part they come across as pretty average normal punk guys that any of us might know. They seem to have their hearts in the right place and for the most part appreciate that they are pretty lucky to be in the situation they're in. The show might be more for readers of *Punk Rock Confidential* than *MRR*, though. TiVo it yourself and see what you think.

***

By the time you read this, *Chaos In Tejas* 2008 will have come and gone. I don't usually do "fests" but I'm making an exception. Actually I've wanted to try and get to this one for the past few years but other commitments have always gotten in the way. There are always good bands and Austin is one of my favorite places in the US. Mostly I'm looking forward to hanging out with friends I haven't seen in a while, going swimming, and eating some good food. The main musical attractions for me this year are Hard Skin, Leatherface (with Dickie Hammond back on guitar!), the Marked Men, and especially Roky Erickson. Can't wait.

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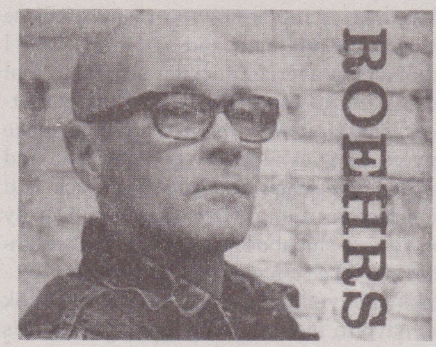


UNITED AND STRONG

Fuck Yes! SACRED SHOCK from Austin, Texas (and parts unknown) has a scorching 7" available for you punks! The new EP out on Toronto, Canada's Schizophrenic Records fucking pulverizes your eardrums! The material was recorded in Austin during late 2007 and features Logan on bass, Matt on drums, Hans on guitar and Alex on vocals. This shit comes out smoking on the first track "For A Living." This is brutal-strength undiluted punk venom! In "For A Living," SACRED SHOCK screams, "We throw away all our time / We throw away our deepest desires / Our dreams, our passions – Everything / Just to survive I'll sell my soul…" Fuck! Now that is a fucking bleak set of lyrics! The second song on side-A is "Overshadowed/ Underestimated." This song offers no solace from your dark thoughts. Read this: "Sheets of rain fill the streets / Day Turns to Night / Everyman for themselves / Levees have broken / Cry out for help / No one hears you!" Fuck all! Side-B is equally desperate with the three-song salvo: "Wrong," "Planet Decay" and "Double Standards." This punk rock music is designed to make you uncomfortable and it accomplishes it's mission! For your copy of the SACRED SHOCK EP contact www.schizophrenicrex.com or sacredshock@gmail.com.

Fuck you hippie punks! BRAIN KILLER from Allston, Mass. has unleashed a devastating demonstration cassette on you hapless fucks! BRAIN KILLER is Jeff on guitar, Marcus on vocals, Dominick on drums and Ryan on bass. This hardcore mayhem was recorded on 2.23.08. All rules were dismissed when this violent purge was harnessed! This vile punk bile attacks with song-one "The Breaking Wheel." Fuck! You segue into "Eyes On Me" and "Religion Refuge And Kidnapping," "When Will It Stop," "Where's The Rope?," "Tranquillizer" and "Fight Back." This hardcore is fucking raw, unadulterated music for the beast in you! Long live Boston hardcore! Contact: BRAIN KILLER, 610 Cambridge Street, Allston, MA 02134, phone: 603-289-9548.

Fucking A! Charlotte, North Carolina's scum-rock heroes, ANTISEEN graced our west-coast shores for only the third time in 25 years! Jeff Clayton, Joe Young and the bad men from brutalsville came to conquer—no prisoners were taken! This tour was assembled under the auspices of Mr. Thomas Bowker, the drummer in BLOWFLY's band. Four dates into the tour the earmarks were fiercely determined. Misters Clayton and Young scalded the surface of the planet with mind-numbing renditions of "Queen City Stomp," "Spare Change," "Ugly American," "Fornication," "Star Whore," "Nothings' Cool," "Fuck The Kids," "I Don't Ask For Nothing," "Wife Beater," "Animal," "Fuck All Y'all," "O.D. For Me," "Today Your Love" and "Stormtrooper." One visit with this band and they will change your perspective on rock'n'roll forever. No longer will the "safe version" of Jerry Lee Lewis be acceptable. From this time forth, all rock'n'roll must contain the dangerous element. ANTISEEN provides that threat night after night, year after year…

Hell yes! NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE from Halfmoon Bay, California continues their assault on the youth of America! The new LP on Even Worse/Way Back When Records keeps the adrenalin pumping! NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE kicks out the jams with "Cut Off," into "Commitment." Next up you get desensitized into the rocker "Reconstruction." This tune will grow hair on your fucking testicles! Fuck yes! Flip this bitch over and you get hammered by "Bite The Bullet," "Ignorant Cancer," "Claustrophobic," "Black And Blue" and "Succubus." This hardcore band is fucking ruthless! Embrace the negative stance of NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE! Even Worse Records c/o Nole DeBoer, Saenredamstratt 44-2, 1072 Amsterdam, Holland , waybackwhen-records.com.

Fuck! DOUBLE NEGATIVE (ex-SUBCULTURE) from North Carolina, has mounted another blitzkrieg attack on you fucks! The punk'n'thrash on this EP is so fucking rough and tough you will be reaching for your jockstrap around your ankles. You will crash through "Raw Energy" and "Excited About Myself." This is unhinged old-school styled thrash-and-burn that will ring true with you old headbangers. Fucking punk as fuck! Also available on Sorry State Records this month is the SMART COPS EP. This shit fucking kicks some punk-rock ass! Side-A starts off with "Sudore America" and segues into "Il Vile E Il Futuro" and "La Soffiata." Fucking punk rock you fucks! Side-B features "Quel Dubbioso Manganello Rosa," "Alla Frontiera" and "Tra Le Reclute Un Pessimo Seggito." Fuck yes! Until next month—see you in Hell, or… at the bar…

For the better half of the last year, I have been completely head-over-heels obsessed with Polish punk. The style has an inherent darkness, even if it's just a really bouncy punk song, which really sets it apart from the rest of the world's punk and hardcore; it ends up sounding completely different from what anyone else was/is doing. I just wanna give a rundown of some of my faves. The majority of these records—the earlier, Communist-era ones—were released on a label called Tonpress, which was an offshoot of the government-controlled publishing arm, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, or KAW. The label didn't only release punk though—in fact, since it was one of only a few labels in the country at the time, they released many current biggies like UB40, Olivia Newton-John, and even the Beatles and Small Faces, along with Joy Division, New Order, and a Polish version of the *Hell Comes To Your House* comp. The posi side of the government pressing these records is that there are thousands-upon-thousands of copies floating around, so they're still attainable at a reasonable price ($15-$20). Even if you gotta resort to eBay, it won't mean that rent will have to wait another week. Here she goes…

The most well-known of the early Polish punk bands is most definitely Dezerter, in part due to DOA championing them after one of their European tours, resulting in *MRR's* release of Dezerter's earliest material as the *Underground Out Of Poland* LP in 1988. The first Dezerter platter is the *Ku Przysz∏oÊci* EP, and with 50,000+ copies out there, it's rather easy to score. These four tracks are great primitive hardcore punk rippers. It's fairly rudimentary and the band was definitely more straightforward than a lot of their regional contemporaries, but it still has a certain desperation and disregard that really helps the songs gel in your brain.

I think the title of "my favorite Polish punk record" has to go to Armia's second LP, *Legenda*. With its use of horns and keyboards (don't be turned off by that at all—I think horns usually have no place in music, but they work unbelievably well here), this is one of the most unique and dark punk records ever! The moody melodies, brilliant guitar playing, haunting vocals, and tungsten heaviness (not in a metallic way, either) just weigh massive here and give the listening experience an incredibly cold feeling. Fuck, I love this record. Released in 1991, this LP wasn't as easy to snag for a number of years as some of these other records, possibly due to the government dropping its involvement in the music industry in 1990, but it was reissued a couple months ago—try www.wmoichoczach.com.pl for a copy. Also, I urge you to check out the videos on YouTube for the *Legenda* songs. I consider these videos to be of the purest brilliance, though, I'm sure many would disagree due to the "circus atmosphere" of it all. Decide for yourselves.

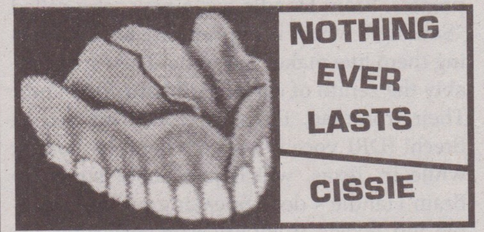
Hot on the heels of *Legenda*'s greatness is Post Regiment's self-titled first LP recorded in '91 and '92. I think this was originally a CD-only release but I may be pulling that shit out of my ass. This band really killed it with the originality and inventiveness of their riffs, and absolutely nailed it in the melody department like no one else. I've listened to this record hundreds of times and the outro to the fourth track, "Religia," still gives me chills every time—near perfection. This record has also been pressed a couple times, so it too shouldn't be that hard to find. The band actually never recorded a bad note, really. Their second LP, *Czarz∏y*, was still amazing as well, as was the third, *Tragiedia Wg Post Regiment*—though that LP was Post Regiment backing up the singer of Tragiedia (another early Polish band) and playing unrecorded Tragiedia songs, so it's not quite a Post Regiment record.

A bit more so than Dezerter, TZN-Xenna and Abaddon were the most straightforward hardcore of the '80s Polish bands. TZN-Xenna's *Dzieci Z Brudnej Ulicy/Ciemny Pokój* single, in its whopping three-and-a-half minutes of bopping hardcore, is a stone-cold classic! The B-side jammy even busts out some DK's-esque reverb-drenched surf-y guitar leads. You can find this relatively cheap, too. Abaddon's *Wet Za Wet* LP on the other hand can be a bit pricey. This came out on the French label, New Wave, which probably has something to do with it, as most of the New Wave catalogue are masters of evading capture. To me, Abaddon has more in common with Finnish rippers of the time like *Skitsofrenia*-era Riistetyt than anything Polish. Another dynamite record.

And last-but-not-least, we have the real wing-nut of the bunch, Âmierç Kliniczna. I don't really know where to begin with this one. I can only liken their song structures to the Minutemen or Big Boys—busy and bouncy basslines, clean guitar (which is also the least prominent instrument in the mix most of the time), crazy-ass drumming, and a real frantic, herky-jerky feel. Couple that with some demented kook singing and horns thrown in here and there, and you're left with something truly original. This might take some real hard listens to get used to, but I promise, it will grow like a fungus. The only release of theirs that I've listened to at length is the *ASP/Jestem Ziarnkiem Piasku* single. I know they have at least one singles but I've only heard it once. This one comes around a lot and is usually really cheap, like $8-$10.

Others worth checking out that I haven't really sat down with are Moskwa and Siekiera. There are amazing, but criminally short, videos of both bands floating around the net (I know for a fact that they are on that one website where you can find any video that you want, who's name I already wrote once, and will not say again cause this ain't no fuckin' ad) from the fabled Jarocin festivals. At least watch the Siekiera one from the '84 fest. It's weird footage but you can see just how massive and fuckin' crazy these shows were. We have tons of photos from some of these fests here at the house that absolutely blow my mind—20,000+ punks wild'n out in the dust. I'll leave it at that.

This month was also sponsored by the Brain Killer demo.



My adult life has mostly consisted of traveling, record collecting, anxiety, bad eating habits, hating people, shit-talking, odd jobs, creating shit for the few that care, ignoring the phone, and everything else that annoys me, blah. I wouldn't have it any other way. In some ways I'm living the punk rock dream, as cheesy as that may sound. I live in a house that has walls lined with punk records and other memorabilia—it's kinda cool. Aesthetically speaking, I really love punk—the music, the inherent anger, the simplicity, DIY, the 'tude, ya know. I loathe the generic image that most people place on it, though, and I think a lot of punks are kind of fuckin' stupid. "Let's smash some windows (next to the show space). Get wild." I don't really care about said windows being smashed. Blind destruction is all right, but I don't have much of a use for it. I usually wait 'til I'm angry at something or someone to destroy shit... I guess I wouldn't have made a very interesting *Repo Man* character. I also don't call people "fags," which means I'm some kind of moralist or something, right? Why are punks so stupid? It's still disappointing to me even though it shouldn't be. I don't like people in general, so why should punks be any different? They're not. You're not. I'm not. It gets incredibly repetitious after awhile...

***

The Chaos In Tejas Fest was pretty cool this

year. I saw lots of friends, and probably made a few. The cheap Tex-Mex eats and vast array of great bands delivered, as always. The weekend definitely didn't make my opinion of punks any higher, though. I mean, some people are sterling and others, eh. I often enjoy watching people from an anthropological standpoint even if I don't like their company, so the fest was flawless in that respect. As expected, the boat show was massive loads of fun… Fat Bob remains one of the funniest humans to walk the planet. We need to get that guy a column, huh? It's weird that Leatherface has such an aggressive, jock fan base and that every straight guy in the room had a crush on Invasion.

Invasion was actually one of the best bands of the fest. They managed to transfer the weird atmosphere from their records onto that awkward Emo's stage. They had cool T-shirts and a brand new 12"; an EP that is sure to make any well-grounded simp fall into a disordered state of brainsick bliss. The surface noise on side two only helps to amplify the process. Brain Handle has a new song called "Smiling," which is appropriate because seeing them live makes me smile. They are probably the zenith of current US hardcore bands. Their frontman, Ed, was stoked on a Kurt Brecht (DRI vocalist) poetry book he bought while in Texas, which just about sums up Brain Handle's deal. Speaking of weird people and Texans, Roky Erickson performed the best set that I've ever witnessed him play, and at the end, Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top made an appearance. The vibe at Roky was pretty much like a total rock concert, which contrasted nicely with the rudimentary and contrived Oi! of Hard Skin. The second Roky stopped, I went out into the Emo's courtyard and my friend Dru immediately started pushing me into the small room the entire way until we were up front to watch Hard Skin finish "ACAC." At 1:00 a.m., the crowd/band was the perfect amount of drunk and sloppy—it was a bit magical, even for a sober chump like myself.

As for other bands, Straightjacket Nation was basic but foreboding and essentially everything that hardcore was ever meant to be. Daniel didn't relent for a second during their set, and the rest of the band stepped up to the task of commanding that enormous stage. Inmates were good and as dumb as you'd expect. They have great songs that I can't deny and they're all about the energy, which was abundant. IronLungHatredSurge was the meanest set of the fest—totally lurching, fun-ruining hardcore that put a new spin on my perception of concept bands. Fy Fan is four for four. I've seen them four times and they're always sloppy but so energetic and raw that it doesn't matter. They consistently get the crowd moving. Leatherface didn't play "Do the Right Thing" and some of the vocals were missing, which was a bit of a letdown, but they still hold the hooks so I'm not writing 'em off yet. The Crude dudes seemed legitimately stoked to be in Texas. They were powerful as all get-out at Emo's and the Parlor the next day. I enjoyed the Parlor set a little more because I got to watch every second of the drummer's manic style. He's a hero for all. The stage dive he did for Leatherface was one of the highlights of the weekend. Los Crudos was ridiculous and so much fun to see even though I don't really like reunions. At least Crudos was doing it for a good cause (a progressive youth center in San Antonio) and not for the scrilla, and they haven't been tamed by age. I missed a few bands as a result of socializing, selling merch, disinterest, and/or arriving to the show late, sorry...

***

Columnist/shitworker/radio personality Layla Gibbon is the new face of *Maximum Rocknroll* distribution. That means that she is in charge of getting the magazines and merch out there to all of you. This month we say goodbye to Martin Sorrondeguy, who put four years of work into getting *MRR* to the general public. It's sad to see him go, but also exciting to have a new person in the office. If you'd like to distribute *MRR* in your town please, write to distro@maximumrocknroll.com for info about rates, etc. Also, mail costs went up this month so expect some hikes in prices on wholesale magazines and possibly ads too.

This month we are also bidding farewell to layout-er Ben Howell. He has helped with zine and record reviews layout for a while and this is his last month with *MRR* as he is moving to Pittsburgh in hopes of becoming Dr. Howell. Does he know that he won't be able to listen to the Velvet Underground while prescribing meds? At any rate, thanks for the help, Ben!!

***

We can take tax-deductible donations. Are you a rich punk that would like to see *MRR* grow and prosper? We need things like new computers and printers to make our lives easier, so if you have money and would like to donate to this cause get in touch at mrr@maximumrocknroll.com for details. If you don't fit the bill of "rich punk" but know someone who does, let them know that we are seeking (tax deductible!) donations. If you think your parents would like to donate, we'll take their money too.

***

Obligatory playlist: Chrome – *Alien Soundtracks,* Scratch Acid – *Just Keep Eating,* Kinks – *Face to Face,* Meanwhile – everything, Lebenden Toten – everything, Invasion – *La Caza,* Chaos In Tejas

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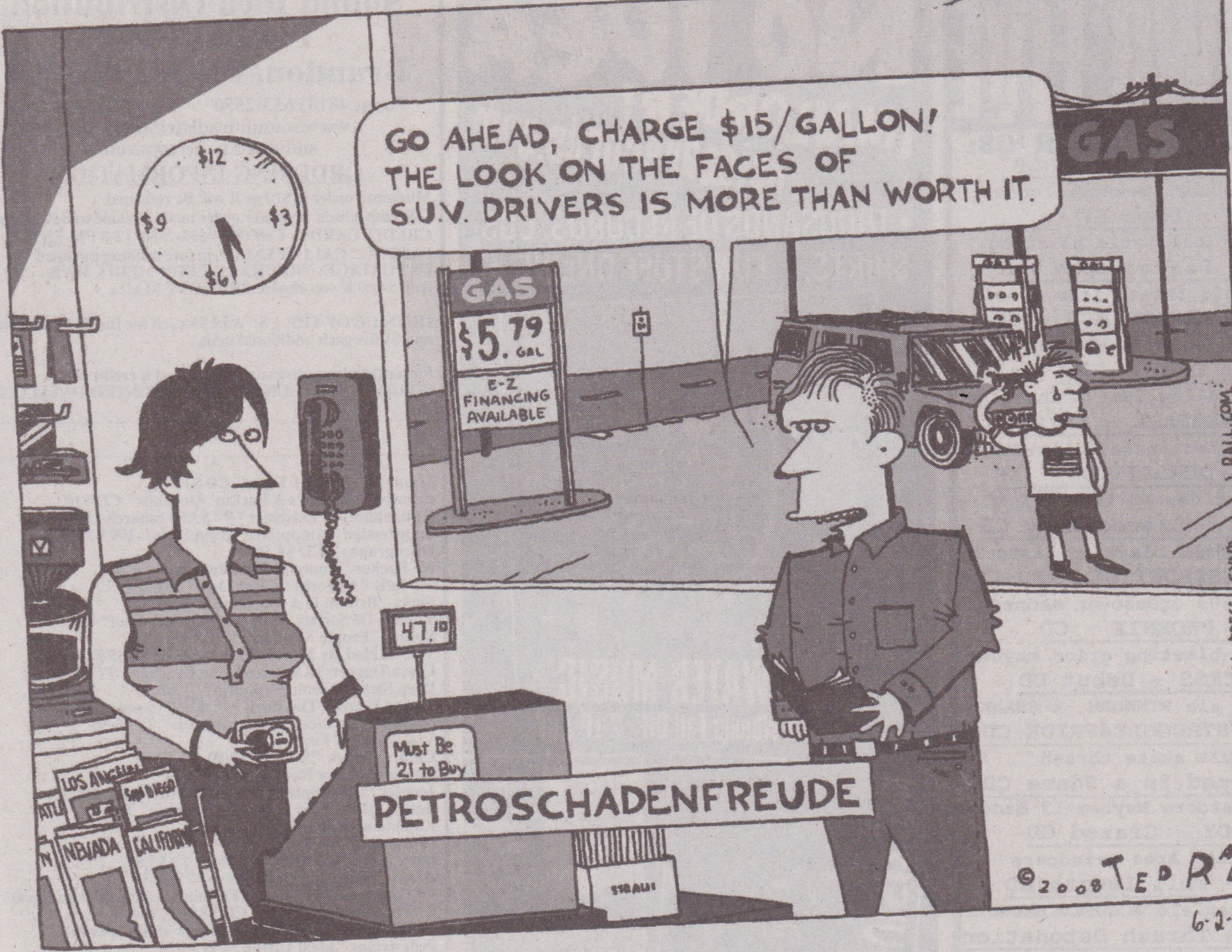

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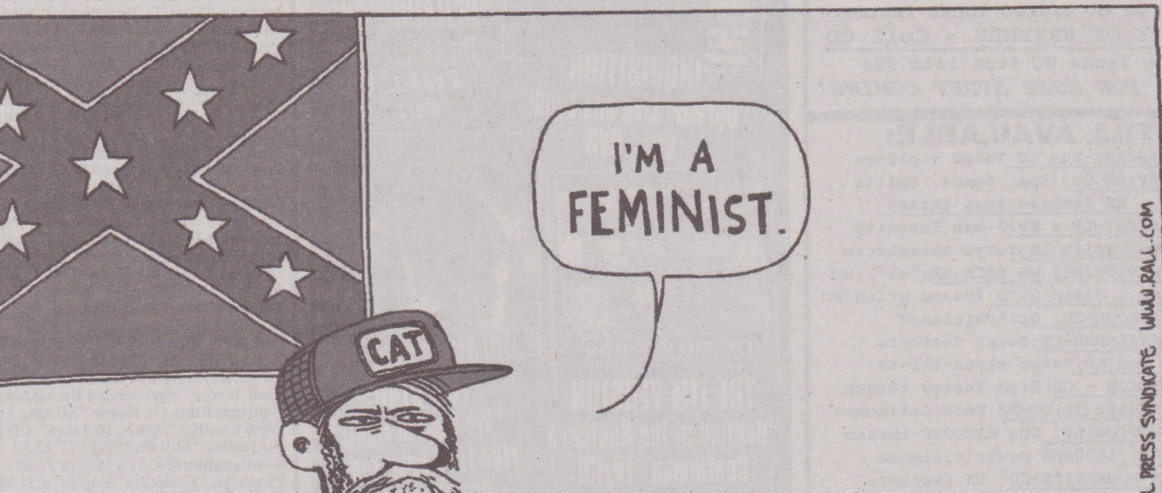

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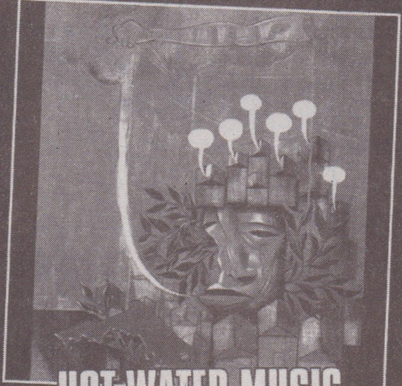

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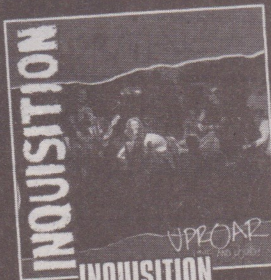

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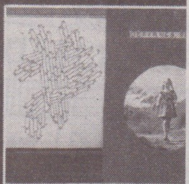

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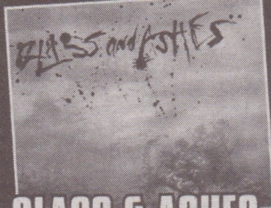

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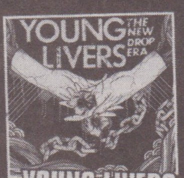

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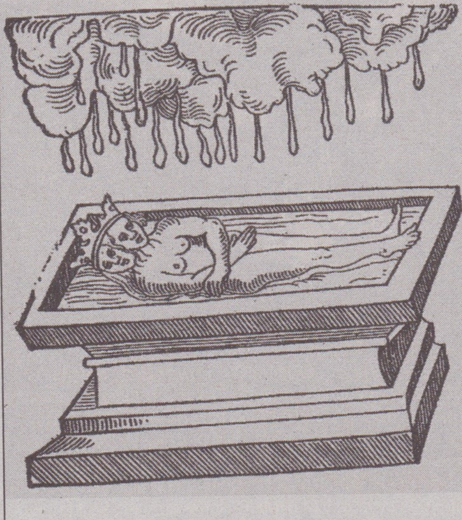

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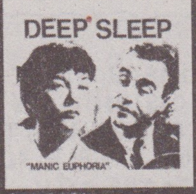

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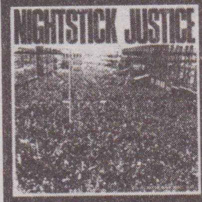

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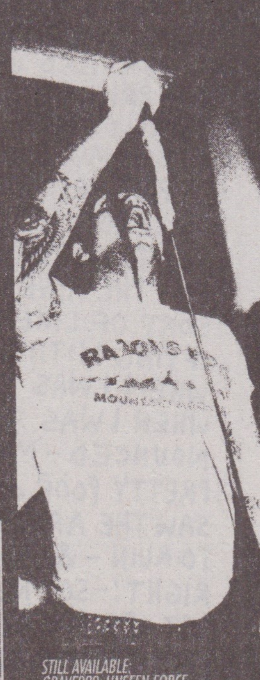

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PEOPS

I WAS BORN AT HOME - UPSTATE NEW YORK - MY MOM GAVE BIRTH TO ME ON A TOILET BY HERSELF - I WAS RAISED IN OSSINING NY WHICH IS FAMOUS FOR SING SING PRISON - IT GETS ITS NAME FROM THE PRISON & I REALLY HAD TO ESCAPE FROM THAT PRISON - WHEN I WAS ABOUT 15 I REALIZED FINALLY THAT I COULD WALK ALL THE WAY ACROSS TOWN TO THE TRAIN STATION & I FIGURED OUT HOW TO GET MYSELF TO THE CITY - NYC - SO I USED TO JUST COME DOWN & GET LOST - THAT WAS MY EARLY ARTISTIC INSPIRATION - I WOULD GO TO THE MET & THEN IN THE SAME DAY I WOULD GO TO PSYCHADELIC SOLUTION & SEE/HEAR BOOKS - ART WAS HARDER TO GET BACK IN THOSE DAYS - YOU HAD TO GO TO DANGEROUS NEIGHBORHOODS & I DID THIS ALL BY MYSELF - IT WAS THE JOURNEY - THE ADVENTURE & DANGER THAT BECAME PART OF THE ARTISTIC PROCESS FOR ME - IT WAS SORT OF LIKE LIBERATION THROUGH ADVENTURE - EVEN AT THAT YOUNG AGE I WAS IDENTIFYING WITH THE VIKINGS & I SAW THESE LITTLE TRIPS AS MY OWN VIKING ADVENTURES - WHEN I WAS 17 I CAME DOWN TO THE BRONX & FOUND MY DAD - HE HAD LEFT MY FAMILY WHEN I WAS 3 - SO I GOT HIS ADDRESS & SHOWED UP TO HIS HOUSE UNINVITED & UNANNOUNCED - MY MOM ALWAYS DISCOURAGED US FROM THE ARTS GROWING UP - WE WERE PRETTY POOR & I THINK SHE SAW THE ARTS AS THE ROAD TO RUIN - & SHE WAS RIGHT! - SO I NEVER HAD ART LESSONS OR SUPPLIES PROVIDED FOR ME BUT I DIDNT LET THAT STOP ME - ALL WE HAD AROUND THE HOUSE WAS EVERYDAY WRITING SUPPLIES - LIKE BALL POINT PENS - SO THAT IS SORT OF HOW I DEVELOPED MY STYLE - I WASNT FROM A BIG CITY & I'M MORE INTROVERTED SO THE GRAFFITI & BRAGGART STYLE DIDNT REALLY APPEAL TO ME - MY WORK IS MORE INTO DETAIL & D.I.Y. BY NECESSITY - ☆ I STILL WORK ☆ - WITH BALL POINT PENS - NOW I MIGHT WORK A LITTLE BIGGER - I EVEN DO ALBUM COVERS WITH BALLPOINT PENS! - I THINK IN DOING THESE DRAWINGS & GETTING CONNECTED WITH D.I.Y. CULTURE I GOT VERY INSPIRED BY THIS LOOSE GROUP OF PEOPLE SEARCHING FOR A BETTER WAY OF DOING THINGS - I RODE FREIGHT TRAINS TO THE WEST COAST & DECIDED THIS WAS WHERE I WOULD SETTLE MY ROOTS - I DECIDED TO PUT OUT A MAGAZINE - YOU KNOW "DESTROYING ANGELS" ARE VERY POISONOUS MUSHROOMS THAT GROW WILD - SO THATS WHAT I DECIDED TO CALL MY MAGAZINE - TO SUPPORT UNDERGROUND D.I.Y. CULTURE - IN THE MID 90'S A LOT OF THE CUT & PASTE ZINES WERE DISSAPPEARRING DUE TO TECHNOLOGY BEING MORE AVAILABLE - BUT I WANTED TO KEEP THAT ORIGINAL CULTURE ALIVE.

DENNIS DREAD - 05/14/2K7 - LOWER EAST SIDE NYC

I FIRST MET DENNIS DREAD IN NYC WHEN HE WAS PART OF THE CARNIVAL OF CHAOS TRAVELING ACTIVIST CIRCUS ORGANIZED BY DOG BOY CIRCA 1995 - AT THE TIME HE HAD A FULL HEAD OF VERY LONG DREADS & I JUST RECENTLY REMEMBER HIM GETTING HIS HEAD SHAVED BY DOG BOY ON THE ROOF OF OUR BUILDING (ALSO MID-90S - YES WE ARE OLD!!) - DENNIS SHOWED ME HIS AMAZING INTENSELY DETAILED ART WORK & EVENTUALLY HE INTERVIEWED ME FOR HIS MAG DESTROYING ANGELS (PLEASE CHECK HIS WEBSITE FOR INFO!! - WWW.DENNISDREAD.COM - OR SNAIL HIM - DESTROYING ANGELS PO BOX 40667 PORTLAND OREGON 97240-0667 USA ($6 PP USA OR $8 PP WORLDWIDE) - I HAD NOT SEEN DENNIS FOR YEARS & THEN ONE DAY A YEAR AGO I WAS WALKING HOME THRU TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK & THERE WAS DENNIS!! - LOOKING FOR ME! - SO I TOOK HIM HOME & CRANKED OUT THIS PEOPS IN ABOUT 45 MINUTES - I LOVE WHEN STUFF LIKE THAT HAPPENS! - TO CONTACT FLY EMAIL FLY@BWAY.NET (PUT MRR IN THE SUBJECT SO I KNOW ITS NOT SPAM) OR SNAIL FLY PO BOX 1318 COOPER STN NYC NY 10276 - FOR FLY ZINES (DOG DAYZ #1 & #2 & PEOPS #3) GO TO WWW.MICROCOSMPUBLISHING.COM & STAY TUNED FOR NEW FLY POSTCARD BOOK & MORE FROM PM PRESS!!

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MRR NEWS

JANTSA KÄRKKÄINEN 1969-2008 RIP

By Markku Hirvelä

Jantsa, the former chief editor of Finnish *Toinen Vaihtoehto* zine, died on 11th of May. Jantsa founded *Toinen Vaihtoehto* in 1989 and acted as its main editor until he suffered a serious brain hemorrhage in late 2006. Even after that he was active in writing columns for the zine.

Jantsa started his musical career already in the '80s in a band called Treblinka. Their 7" is surely one of the most underrated records from Finland. He was also a bassist of Juggling Jugulars, which is one of Finland's leading punk bands. Jantsa was in the band from 1990 to 2006.

Toinen Vaihtoehto had a huge impact on the Finnish scene during the pre-internet days. It was pretty much the only zine that came out regularly, and everybody knew *Toinen Vaihtoehto*. The zine continues today and the latest issue is #211. However, it was Janta's creation and life work and was a huge achievement that operated with limited resources.

He was definitely one of the most active people in Finnish punk scene. He was an anarchist, a pacifist, and a punk. He was very quiet, gentle, and modest human being, definitely both a thinker and an actor, very intelligible, opinionated, and in many ways a very remarkable person.

He has always been an inspiration. He always stood up for his beliefs and never sold-out his opinions. He was one of a kind, very sweet and is missed very much by very many.

Rest in peace, dear friend.

—Arto Hietikko, Markku Hirvelä & the rest of the *Toinen Vaihtoehto* crew.

I just buried a friend
He had come to the end
But I can't help feeling that it needn't have been
Caught in the flak
There was no turning back
So he gave up his life...
—Amebix, "Coming Home"

NEW YORK TO BACK SAME-SEX UNIONS FROM ELSEWHERE

By JEREMY W. PETERS
From an article in the *New York Times*

ALBANY — Gov. David A. Paterson has directed all state agencies to begin to revise their policies and regulations to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other jurisdictions, like Massachusetts, California and Canada.

A case involving Patricia Martinez and Lisa Golden was cited in the directive changing policies on gay unions in New York. In a directive issued on May 14, the governor's legal counsel, David Nocenti, instructed the agencies that gay couples married elsewhere "should be afforded the same recognition as any other legally performed union." The revisions are most likely to involve as many as 1,300 statutes and regulations in New York governing everything from joint filing of income tax returns to transferring fishing licenses between spouses.

In a videotaped message given to gay community leaders at a dinner on May 17, Mr. Paterson described the move as "a strong step toward marriage equality." And people on both sides of the issue said it moved the state closer to fully legalizing same-sex unions in this state.

"Very shortly, there will be hundreds and hundreds and hundreds, and probably thousands and thousands and thousands of gay people who have their marriages recognized by the state," said Assemblyman Daniel O'Donnell, a Democrat who represents the Upper West Side and has pushed for legalization of gay unions.

Massachusetts and California are the only states that have legalized gay marriage, while others, including New Jersey and Vermont, allow civil unions. Forty-one states have laws limiting marriage as a union between a man and a woman. Legal experts said Mr. Paterson's decision would make New York the only state that did not itself allow gay marriage but fully recognized same-sex unions entered into elsewhere.

The directive is the strongest signal yet that Mr. Paterson, who developed strong ties to the gay community as a legislator, plans to push aggressively to legalize same-sex unions as governor. His predecessor, Eliot Spitzer, introduced a bill last year that would have legalized gay marriage, but even as he submitted it, doubted that it would pass. The Democratic-dominated Assembly passed the measure, but the Republican-led Senate has refused to call a vote on it.

Short of an act by the Legislature, the directive ordered by Mr. Paterson is the one of the strongest statements a state can make in favor of gay unions. "Basically we've done everything we can do on marriage legislatively at this point," said Sean Patrick Maloney, a senior adviser to Mr. Paterson. "But there are tools in our tool kit on the executive side, and this is one."

The directive cited a Feb. 1 ruling by a State Appellate Court in Rochester that Patricia Martinez, who works at Monroe Community College and who married her partner in Canada, could not be denied health benefits by the college because of New York's longstanding policy of recognizing marriages performed elsewhere, even if they are not explicitly allowed under New York law. The appeals court said that New York must recognize marriages performed in other states that allow the practice and in countries that permit it, like Canada and Spain.

Monroe County filed an appeal with the state's highest court, the Court of Appeals, but it was rejected on technical grounds. The county has not decided whether to file another appeal, a county spokesman said on Wednesday. The Court of Appeals has previously ruled that the state's Constitution did not compel the recognition of same-sex marriages and that it was up to the Legislature to decide whether do so.

Groups that oppose gay marriage said the governor was essentially trying to circumvent the Legislature. "It's a perfect example of a governor overstepping his authority and sidestepping the democratic process," said Brian Raum, senior legal counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund, a national organization

opposed to same-sex marriage. "It's an issue of public policy that should be decided by the voters."

Gay rights advocates, however, applauded Mr. Paterson, saying the broad directive would make it clear that gay couples wed in other states were entitled to all of the benefits of marriage in New York and relieve them of the burden of challenging or suing individual agencies. "He saw no reason to stand in the way of making sure these couples benefit from the rights and protections that come with marriage," said Susan Sommer, senior counsel for Lambda Legal, a group that advocates for gay rights. "It shouldn't be the burden of each lesbian or gay couple to have to advocate before an agency every time a new issue comes up."

In the directive, Mr. Nocenti wrote that state agencies should review all rules and regulations to determine whether they conflict with recognition of same-sex marriages and report back to him by June 30. Mr. Nocenti said that state agencies that did not provide "full faith and credit to same-sex marriages" could be subject to liability. He said that many changes could be made through internal memos or policy statements, but that regulatory changes might be needed in some cases.

Mr. Nocenti directed agency heads to a list of state regulations and statutes that were likely to need overhaul, including measures affecting a spouse's ability to collect a deceased spouse's pension and to continue to use public housing. In addition to conferring more rights on gay couples, the changes might also require more responsibilities. For example, the order that required certain employees of the executive branch to file financial disclosure documents for their spouses would also apply to gay spouses. It is less clear what the directive means for state policies that are not enforced by state agencies but by the courts, like those that govern child custody or protect a husband and wife from having to testify against one another about statements they made to each other while married.

Coincidentally, Mr. Nocenti's directive was dated one day before the California Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. Gay marriage proponents said they expected that ruling, which will take effect in mid-June unless the court grants a stay, will lead some gay couples in New York to marry in California so they can take advantage of the protections under New York law.

Of course, many gay New Yorkers might find Canada to be a more convenient option, some gay rights supporters pointed out. Mr. Nocenti also said that marriages performed in Massachusetts should be recognized in New York, though Massachusetts, unlike California, does not permit gay residents from other states to be married there if their home state prohibits same-sex unions.

While gay rights advocates widely praised the spirit of Mr. Paterson's policy, some see more than a little irony in the fact that New York has yet to allow gays to marry. "If you're going to treat us as equals, why don't you just give us the marriage license?" said Alan Van Capelle, executive director of Empire State Pride Agenda. "So this is a temporary but necessary fix for a longer-term problem, which is marriage equality in New York State."

PROPOSAL TO BAN CAGES IN CHICKEN FARMS PITS EFFICIENCY AGAINST HUMANE TREATMENT

BY ALEX FELSINGER
From an article in the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*

GREEN CITY—From inside the trailer-size office at Sunrise Farms, one can hear the incessant squawking of 160,000 chickens housed nearby. The Petaluma-based egg producer generates the vast majority of eggs sold in the Bay Area with its seven properties and 1 million hens, one of two large egg operations in a region that used to have thousands of smaller chicken farms.

On one wall of the office a framed aerial black-and-white photograph shows the same property as it appeared more than 70 years ago. The layout of buildings hasn't changed much over time, still retaining the long, thin structures aligned side-by-side. But in the photograph, little white specks populate the space between buildings—they're chickens, and all 10,000 were free to wander. Today the birds are kept indoors and, to save space and increase production, are typically confined in small cages. These "battery" cages are stacked in rows four cages high, allowing each bird 67 square inches of room—about the size of a large shoebox.

Although the egg industry says the cage systems are science-based and humane, animal welfare activists say they are cruel and restrict natural behaviors. In November, voters will decide whether to ban the cages in California, thanks to a six-month signature-gathering effort sponsored by the Humane Society of the United States along with other animal welfare groups. As hundreds of veterinarians, businesses, farmers, and politicians—including Assembly member Mark Leno and state senator Carole Migden—continue to endorse the measure, the California egg industry is rallying farmers from across the country against it. If voters approve the law, California's egg farmers would be required to move the state's 19 million caged birds into cage-free facilities by 2015.

Since 2002, Florida, Arizona, Oregon, and Colorado have passed similar laws regarding the confinement of pregnant pigs and veal calves in crates—both included in the California measure—but California would be the first state to pass a law regarding the confinement of egg-laying hens. The pork and veal industries have begun voluntarily phasing out confinement practices nationally, and animal welfare groups hope for a similar response from the egg industry if the measure passes in California.

But some consumer groups and egg producers fear the cost of eggs could increase drastically as a result of the new laws. The industry is historically volatile, with prices rising and falling week to week due to disease outbreaks and fluctuating consumer demand. Recently, however, the industry has seen steady growth. The average American now buys around 260 eggs per year, an increase since the 1990s that has resulted in higher profits for the $3 billion-a-year industry.

Although the financial toll the measure would have on farmers and consumers is unclear, the Humane Society touts a study prepared for an industrywide meeting in 2006 as evidence that the cost to switch over to cage-free farming would be minimal. The report claims that the difference between constructing and operating a cage-free facility compared to a caged one amounts to less than one cent per egg. However, the work-up assumes land prices of $10,000 per acre—a fourth of the average land cost in Sonoma County. But even using the higher estimate, the difference is still only slightly more than a penny per egg.

Arnie Riebli, the managing owner of Sunrise Farms, says he disagrees with those figures and doesn't understand how they were calculated. Indeed, he thinks the cost of cage-free production is closer to double that of caged production. Even so, he says that while initial costs are higher, he receives a higher profit margin on cage-free eggs because of their specialty pricing.

If required to raise only cage-free birds, Riebli says his business will lose its competitive edge to out-of-state producers. One-third of California's eggs currently come from outside of the state, which means the delivery routes and trucks from the Midwest are established, which means flow could easily be increased. "Every other state is going to sit out there and ship more eggs in here," he says. "They're not stopping it. They're just moving it somewhere else."

Riebli's says he is concerned with his hens' welfare as much as ever, and has taken trips across the world to research the latest in hen-raising technology. But he stands by his methods. "I use myself as a judge to see what my animals will like," he says. "I go into the building just as I am. If I'm comfortable without a mask, without any protection, then the birds must be too."

The chickens closest to the office are considered cage-free. The 4,000 birds inside the building are fed an all-organic diet and, although quarters are still tight (slightly over a square foot is allotted for each), the birds can dust bathe, perch on posts, and spread their wings. Sunrise Farms reflects the entire industry, since only about 5 percent of its egg-

laying hens are raised without cages. In most other buildings, birds are held in battery cages. Ten birds live in each four-foot metal cage.

The eggs are packed on site and distributed through NuCal Foods, the largest egg supplier in the western United States. NuCal also delivers eggs from Gemperle Enterprises, the company whose facility recently came under fire after animal rights activists released undercover footage of severe animal abuse at its farm. Although the farm now claims the video was staged, it showed heinous acts of cruelty, including stomping and throwing hens. More important, it showed the conditions of the hens living in battery cages. Many had excessive feather loss, abnormal growths, and infections.

Riebli says he wants to distance his farm from the cruel treatment shown in the video. Still, he admits that all laying hens are susceptible to cancers, infections, and feather loss, although not usually as severe as what was shown in the video. "There's a disconnect to where people's food comes from," Riebli says. "They think it comes from the back of the grocery store, but unfortunately it doesn't. It has to come from somewhere."

The Riebli family has been in the Petaluma egg business for more than 100 years, and since 1960 his company has grown by joining with other egg producers. The farm survived the Depression, the bird-flu scare, many salmonella outbreaks, and even break-in attempts from animal rights activists. Now that iron bars guard the office windows, Riebli is no longer as worried about criminal attempts against his farm. His main concern these days is that the law, although aimed at protecting chickens, could put him out of business. "Animals are not human," he says, furrowing his brow and raising his voice slightly. "They don't have intellect. Chickens probably have brains the size of a pea."

Sara Shields, who holds a doctorate in animal behavior from the University of California, Davis, is among the most vocal American scientists to oppose the use of battery cages. She notes that in Europe, where battery cages were banned in 1999, she'd be considered moderate. She recently released an extensive study comparing the welfare of hens in battery cages to those in cage-free systems. "I would like to see us raise the bar for the treatment of animals," she says. "There's a limit to how high that bar can be set in cages. I don't think cages have the potential to be humane."

But most American agricultural scientists disagree and say both systems can be operated humanely, though they grant that poorly-run versions of either type can be disastrous. To prevent mismanagement, United Egg Producers, a lobbying group that represents 85 percent of the country's egg farms, decided to develop standards for caged production in 1999. They sought out UC Davis poultry scientist Joy Mench to lead a team of scientists in creating these welfare guidelines.

By analyzing the disease, injury, mortality, and productivity rates of birds kept in different systems and spaces, the group developed criteria that the industry subsequently adopted. Among these standards is the 67-square-inch minimum space requirement for each hen. These measures mostly focus on disease and mortality control as well as egg-laying productivity, but have less concern for behavioral welfare.

Although caged birds in modern systems sometimes have lower disease rates than cage-free birds, Shields says the potential for humane treatment in cage-free systems is much higher. Most scientists agree that hens in battery cages cannot engage in many of their natural behaviors, including wing-flapping, nest-building, perching, dust-bathing, scratching, and preening. And although disease control in cage-free systems is more difficult, Shields says, cage-free flocks can be maintained healthfully and successfully.

But Riebli has had problems with one of his younger cage-free flocks at Sunrise Farms. They became startled and piled on top of each other earlier this month, he says, suffocating 20 percent of the birds.

But Shields says this is highly unusual, and points toward newer, aviary-style cage-free systems as a solution for producers who encounter the problem. These methods divide the birds into smaller flocks within the same building, and rely on multiple levels to allow birds to perch and nest. Another potential issue, she says, is the lack of a perfectly-bred hen for cage-free production. After years of breeding hens to produce well in battery cages, breeders only recently have begun breeding for traits that benefit cage-free production. "The bird needs to be suited to the environment, and the environment also needs to be more suited to the birds," she says.

An aviary system costs more to set up than an empty cage-free building, but Shields dismisses these costs. "If we keep racing to the bottom in the name of cheap food, the eventual cost is going to be put on the animals," Shields says. "At some point we have to balance economic costs with moral and ethical considerations."

Over the past two-and-a-half years, a group of 15 politicians, scientists, farmers, and ranchers banded together to do just that. The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production released a report last month detailing many troubling issues with the country's farm animal production. The group specifies that the California ballot measure is a great place to start.

More than 100 cows graze Bill Niman's 1,000-acre Marin County ranch, but only a couple have ever successfully navigated down the cliffs from the pastures to the beaches. Niman's home is less than a mile inland, and on clear days he can see across the bay to San Francisco and even Daly City. He founded Niman Ranch on this property in the early 1970s and quickly caused a stir by deciding not to feed antibiotics and hormones to his cows. At first his fellow ranchers didn't take him seriously, but now nearly all beef producers feed their cattle hormone-free food. More than 30 years later, Niman is determined to use the credibility he has earned to help all farm animals gain better treatment.

Last year, at 63, he gave up his seat on Niman Ranch's board of directors, effectively ending his involvement with the company he once ran. Now he volunteers with the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production. "One of my missions in life is to change the way animals are treated and how food is produced in this country," he says.

As part of the commission's research, Niman visited one of the nation's largest caged production houses in Colorado. Despite the state-of-the-art automated system, Niman was not impressed. "It's pretty hard to put a rosy picture of 1 million chickens living five birds to a cage with no room to move around or stretch their wings," he says. "If I ran the place, I'd have trouble sleeping at night."

Niman believes the public wants to see reform in the food production industry. He says that this measure, and any laws that improve animal welfare, will only expedite what would eventually come naturally due to consumer demand. "I'm not one to advocate more and more legislating, but I also know what's going on out there," he says. "Change is so critical and coming—that the sooner that change can begin, and the more orderly and methodical that change can be, the better off everyone will be."

Niman is part of a food movement centered around the Bay Area that includes author and University of California, Berkeley professor Michael Pollan, who also has expressed support for the measure. "The treatment [of hens] is important for reasons for morality, ethics, and sustainability," Pollan tells the Guardian, adding another ulterior motive for changing how hens are kept: "Eggs from hens that live outdoors on grass are a excellent product, even more nutritious and tasty."

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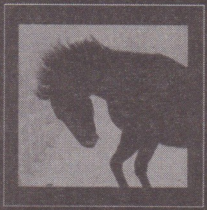

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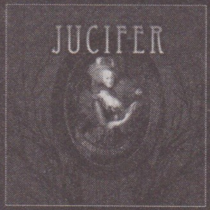

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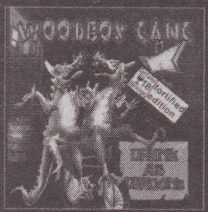

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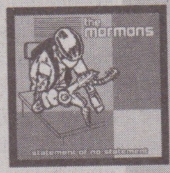

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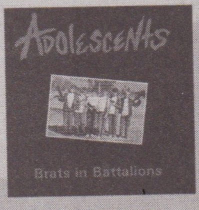

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THE HOLY GARAGE: Recent peace talks mean little to a little record label busy shaping the punk to come in Israel.

By Paul Galipeau

Annapolis Lost

It's Wednesday night in Jerusalem. Conversation topics include Russ Meyer, SONIC YOUTH, falafel, and Palestine. I find myself in the company of the extended family of one of Israel's only independent rock labels, Sshaking RecordsS. fairly young, its first release came out in April, 2006, but I discovered that it is interested in more than releasing records. From supporting the production of visual art, to distributing Israeli music released by other labels, and even working hard to attract independent bands from Europe and North America to Israel. What's more, not especially keen on participating in Middle Eastern politics, I learned that those involved with the label are inevitably affected by it.

Sshaking President Lee-or Von Astro has a radio show on 106 FM, Israel's campus radio station, but tonight, other DJs from the station are preparing their set lists before what promises to be a packed night at Sira Bar. Meanwhile, in Annapolis, Maryland, United States President George W. Bush is meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Near Sira, the *Yasam*, Israel's special M-16-wielding motorcycle police, is on patrol. Lately, violence has been relatively limited this side of the Israeli-West Bank barrier but due to the meetings 9000km away, Jerusalem is on high alert and I'm starting to feel the tension people keep telling me about.

By now, Sira is starting to fill with all kinds of people: young, old, Arab, Jew... Tension spills into the bar like a cold draft but things are warming up. People didn't come here to talk politics, but, if you ask around, everyone has an opinion. "I don't believe in the Annapolis thing," says Von Astro, "I hope I'm wrong but to me, it's the same conversation over and over." Some are optimistic about the outcome, but to many, Annapolis is just another city in the United States. "We don't give a fuck about Annapolis. This isn't where our stress is from," says Noga Shatz, lead singer and guitarist for the Tel Avivi Sshaking band, NX2. I tell her that there's supposed to be good surfing in Annapolis. "See? Now, I'm interested!"

Israelis aren't only born into religion, they're born into politics. In other countries, an actively political person might be part of a minority but here, to be apolitical is a decision people make and one that cannot be taken for granted. To be apolitical can be a sacrifice. For many, it means opting out of the mandatory military service—a complicated and lengthy feat few accomplish, often by convincing the committee that they are insane or gay.

Lee-or Von Astro, his girlfriend Rony and 106 FM DJ Oded Fluss at Sira Bar in Jerusalem

Sskating and Sshaking

Chon Leevs, guitarist for LOS KIKES, the first band to release something on Sshaking, is among those few. "When you're 18, you go to the army and after that, a lot of real rockers totally change. They stop skateboarding and going to shows and then they get a job and start a family. I didn't go to the army. Why beat people up when you aren't into it? Just for a higher rank? Just give me a *Thrasher*, a beer, and good times." *Thrasher*, of course, is the seminal skateboard magazine that has recently become difficult to purchase in Israel. It isn't clear why *Thrasher* is unavailable but many companies simply refuse to deal with Israel due to the politics involved, occasionally as a result of relationships they wish to maintain with neighboring Arab nations.

Sharon feels that even if he didn't do any military service, he is "contributing to the country with art and music." There are some challenges though as he describes, "the situation with Gaza and the West Bank means that no foreigners are touring here. If we can't see other bands, we have a harder time knowing what's going on. There was a lot more activity in the '80s, and with that there were a lot more bands from Israel." Knowing how popular MySpace is with Israeli bands, I ask if online services like this helps Israelis get an idea of music going on in the international scene. He tells me that while, "the internet lets people read about stuff, it isn't like seeing it live. The attitude and soul is completely different."

It is still possible to find foreign material though. For example, Sharon's band, LOS KIKES, has a song that shamelessly lifts lines from Harmony Korine's 1997 film *Gummo*: "There once was a girl from Salt Lake City / With two cord legs and two rubber titties / She loved electricity / But she burned off gas / With a V8 pussy / And a Cadillac ass."

In addition to paying tribute to American cult films through music, Sharon spends his days working in a clothing store that regularly takes artwork without permission from websites like gigposters .com and threadless.com and prints them onto t-shirts made of fabric they cut themselves. He's also got his own personal screen-printing operation, which is where his inspiration truly shines. In his studio, we find over one hundred screens with designs based on everything from '80s skateboard graphics to NAPALM DEATH.

Seeing himself as part of a minority in Israel, he claims, "The atmosphere in Israel is not for rock and roll," adding that some music can take up to a decade to reach Israel after becoming popular in the United States. "I first heard THE SEX PISTOLS *Nevermind the Bullocks* in 1992 and before that, when I saw the cover for IRON MAIDEN's *Seventh Son of a Seventh Son* in an issue of *Thrasher*, I didn't even know it was music until the next summer when I saw the tape in a record store. I must have listened to it 1000 times. That was it for me."

Sharon continues, "I'm into trash art and skateboarding. I'm not thinking about terror-

ists. You can wear a helmet and bullet-proof clothing but then a piece of a building can fall off and that's what might kill you."

Struggling With Modernity

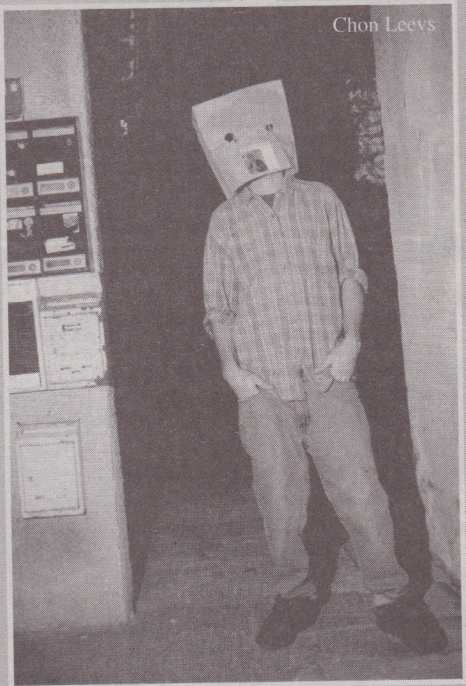
Noga Shatz' group NX2 is normally a two-piece but she's been solo for a while and is currently busy auditioning new members. "Modern life attacked Israel too early," she tells me. "Israeli people weren't ready. There is a big gap between real ambitions and outside obligations." The situation for her is a tense one as she describes a feeling other Israelis also seem to share: internal clashes several times a day and a feeling of being on the edge of a nervous breakdown.

A bit shy, Shatz doesn't open up immediately but she emphasizes that many Israelis are chasing something that would be rightly described as the *American Dream*. To Israelis, as much as this ideal is admired it is also, as Shatz claims, "from a place beyond our personality."

This place isn't completely easy to avoid, however. The United States in Israel is represented through network television, music, and the English language. Many Israelis even speak what may be considered perfect North American English. When asked how her English got so good, one young Israeli tells me "I used to watch a lot of *Police Academy* movies."

Israel's Elvis

Just as the English language influences culture, people like Charlie Megira, sometimes considered to be a sort of Israeli Ricky Nelson, combine Hebrew with a decidedly western style of music. Preferring to release his music on his own imprint, The Charlie Megira Recording Company, Sshaking Recordss still promotes and distributes his material. Living in an apartment decorated a little like a Tiki bar in Tel Aviv's Arab district of *Yafo*, the impact that American culture has had on him is evident. Quickly, as though it is a deep secret, Megira tells me something, "Charlie is not my real name. I wanted a name I could use that would be easily erased. I had an idea that I could be like Elvis Presley for Israel and one day decide not to do music anymore and go on with my life."


Chon Leevs

Tra La La Las Boys practice

Having played in several different bands, Megira performs regularly with members of other Sshaking bands and has good grasp on the relationship between the Israeli music industry and the military. "Popular music in Israel comes from the army. Soldiers are recruited to form pop groups that are intended to continue after their members complete their service."

And while Megira's introduction to music did not follow this path, he has managed to earn himself some status within the country, having made appearances on both radio and TV. "A bus blew up not long before I was supposed to play on TV so the people asked me to play a quiet song. That's what I did."

Continuing with the topic of politics, he adds, "There is no real enemy nation. Egypt and Syria are not enemies to Israel. The enemies within these countries are criminals. We can't forget that Fatah and Hamas are also killing each other."

Astronomical Missions

Lee-or Von Astro shares a story about another bomb going off moments before a show was about to start. "It is always a question of if we should go on with it or not but I think that it means something when we do. It changes your mood and maybe it isn't moral to put on a show when this is happening, but what else can you do? You can't stop the life."

In Israel, Astro claims, many see "sports as a necessity but that music is a luxury." For him and his friends, however, it has become a way of life. "We are music missionaries," he says. "That is one of the goals for Sshaking Recordss. We want to make music from Israel but to help this we want to continue bringing bands from outside."

In June 2007, he succeeded in bringing Atlanta's BLACK LIPS and in January 2008, he welcomed Canadians KING KHAN AND BBQ to the Holy Land. A few other things are in the works but it can take time. "We asked Jay Reatard to come, but he was scared," he says, laughing a little. "Progress will come from little things like this. It's important to laugh and to try and change perceptions."

Von Astro's sense of humor also comes through after he describes a situation that he initiated in 2006 when the Hizbollah were attacking northern Israel. Posing as *Presidente of the Turbojugend Jerusalem*, fan club of the Norwegian band TURBONEGRO, he challenged *Turbojugend Beirut* to a *friendly/deadly football match in order to decide who will win the second Lebanon war*!'

Of course, it was a joke. "There isn't even a *Turbojugend Beirut*!" admits Von Astro. But still, this little stunt garnered some international attention including direct communication with members of the band. "Life has a lot more to it than land," says Von Astro. "If there's peace, maybe the music will be better. Right now, it is so lame. It's embarrassing. Israelis steal music with no shame. They take songs from ten years ago and sing over them in Hebrew. It's shit."

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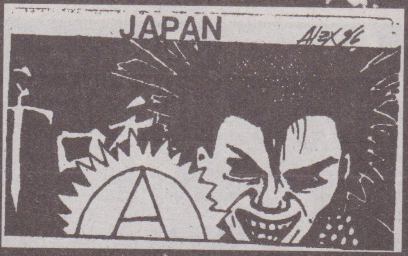

photos by Tamachang

Bands

Let's start with the obvious. I'm sure you all remember TEENGENERATE and are probably even aware that a good fraction of them have formed a newer, *power-poppier* band called FIRESTARTER. They play regularly, have two full-length LPs out and a third coming soon (www.firestarter.nextposition.com).

Fink is still holding things down with THE RAYDIOS. I mentioned that they played a FIRESTARTER song and was informed in no uncertain terms was it a RAYDIOS song that FIRESTARTER played. Obviously you can't go wrong with anything either of the brothers touch... (www.myspace.com/theraydios)

Half of THE REGISTRATORS are currently in a new band called BRIGHTLINER. Some elements are consistent, such as their unique blending of guitar and vocal lines, but at a less manic pace but the drums often doing a 16th note hi-hat beat I associate with NEW ORDER (www.brightliner.com).

BACK TO BASICS involves more scene royalty with Shintaro from FIRST ALERT on vocals, and Susumu from PRIVATE WAYS and COCKSCRATCH on guitar. Not a lot of distortion or yelling, but still very fast and tough; a nice approach (www.myspace.com/backtobasicsshintaronakamura).

THE PRISONER is one of the more varied and exciting live acts around. Besides the usual bass, drums, guitar, and vocals, they also have keyboards and attractive background singers. They mix an astonishing blend of styles: soul, rock, punk, mod, and they don't say so but I'd include *J-pop*. Their second full-length *Chaos Tokyo* just came out on the Vivid Sound label (www.the-prisoner.cool.ne.jp/).

HAT TRICKERS is another visually stunning live act, as they dress in an even more horrific version of the outfits from *A Clockwork Orange*. They manage to incorporate a violin player into their tough streetpunk sound (www.myspace.com/hattrickers).

NANOX usually plays very punk songs at a manic pace, though they have recently been accentuating their newer wavier elements, which is not all that surprising considering they have a keyboard player. Their new 7" on Chicago-based Shit Sandwich records (www.shitsandwichrecords.com) is a good representation of their overall sound. Also available on the *Neo Wave Nastros* comp (The Modernist Recordings, www.themodernist.com/ recordings.html) with several other bands mentioned here (www.nanox.themodernist.com).

THE SLOWMOTIONS… I asked drummer/songwriter Izumi if he liked THE STRANGLERS and he rolled up his sleeve to reveal a tattooed rat crawling up his arm. One of the punkest bands around…They have a dark sound, yet their shows are more about having a good time (www.ip.tosp.co.jp).

THE CLIMAX is one of the best-named bands in Japan. Minoru Imagination on drums, Hatsui Romantic on guitar, Man Humane on bass, and Billy-O Jones on guitar and vocals. A touch of Oi!, a healthy dose of pop, and some of the most intelligible English lyrics you're likely to hear! "I used to look for a good fuck / Sick of fucks!" (www.theclimax.jp)

NU COORDINATOR has relocated from Hokkaido and is taking Tokyo by storm. They are a medical-looking storm as they usually perform in white doctor's coats, which suit their sonic technical wizardry. A three-piece featuring bass, drums, and guitar/vocals, yet everything is processed to sound electronic. Where else but Tokyo will bands make a vocoder sound punk?

JOYSTAX enjoys getting drunk and destroying the stage while they play, which wouldn't be all that impressive except they're also really, *really* good! Nice grooves in the rhythm section, and tough aggressive GANG OF FOUR-esque scrappy guitar and the vocal styling of the one and only Kento over it all.

BRAZIL UFO has actually done brief tours of the US, so if they do it again, make sure you go! Very tight, tough songs serve as the live backdrop for Bancho to terrorize the audience. He'll get in your face and scream at you long enough for it to go from shocking to amusing to pretty much just uncomfortable. He is usually dressed in a sumo thong or quite often nothing at all. The rest of the band is equally great, if less mobile and more clothed…

WATER CLOSET, named for the premise that "everybody needs water closet," has no shortage of well-written, melodic pop-influenced punk songs. And half the band denies it but there is an unmistakable hint of emo in there too. New CD *15 x 4* out on Swept Records (www.airnude.com/watercloset).

ANGLIPOGACHAN formed on their theory of *Don Juan Music*. That is, once you have had your way with a melody there is no need to return for seconds. Their music lacks repetition and their live outfits include frilly-shirted Ippei on violin, bodysuited Crazy on guitar, spikey punk Takeshi on bass (and kazoo). (www.anglipogachan.com).

THE DADDY LONGFEET loves Oi! and plays it well. Skinhead and mod fashion—no fighting at the shows please (www.page.freett.com/therules/UntitledFrame-1).

Stores

Base Records in Koenji is the center for all your punk-rocking needs. Co-owner Toshio plays in a great band CODE, and stocks everything you could want from Tokyo, Japan, and beyond (www.recordshopbase.com).

Disk Union is nice for being a small chain, specializing in seriously everything—usually separated by store or at least by floor. They have punk rock specialty shops in Shibuya and Shinjuku (wwwq.diskunion.net).

Clubs

20,000 Volt Koenji took their name from the fictional club in the classic Tokyo punk movie *Burst City*. Very divey; literally two floors underground, and one of the most painfully loud sound systems available (www16.ocn.ne.jp/~k_20000v).

There is a phenomenal index of nearly every club (referred here as "live house") in Tokyo at www.tokyogigguide.com/venues_a

I've listed band sites where possible but a lot of them use MySpace and YouTube, so search around if you want to listen to some of this stuff for free! I also made a podcast with live, studio, and interviews, featuring these and other Tokyo bands at www.nikkeisindex.blogspot.com.

Contact me:
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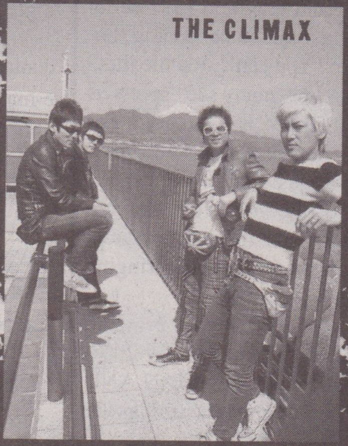

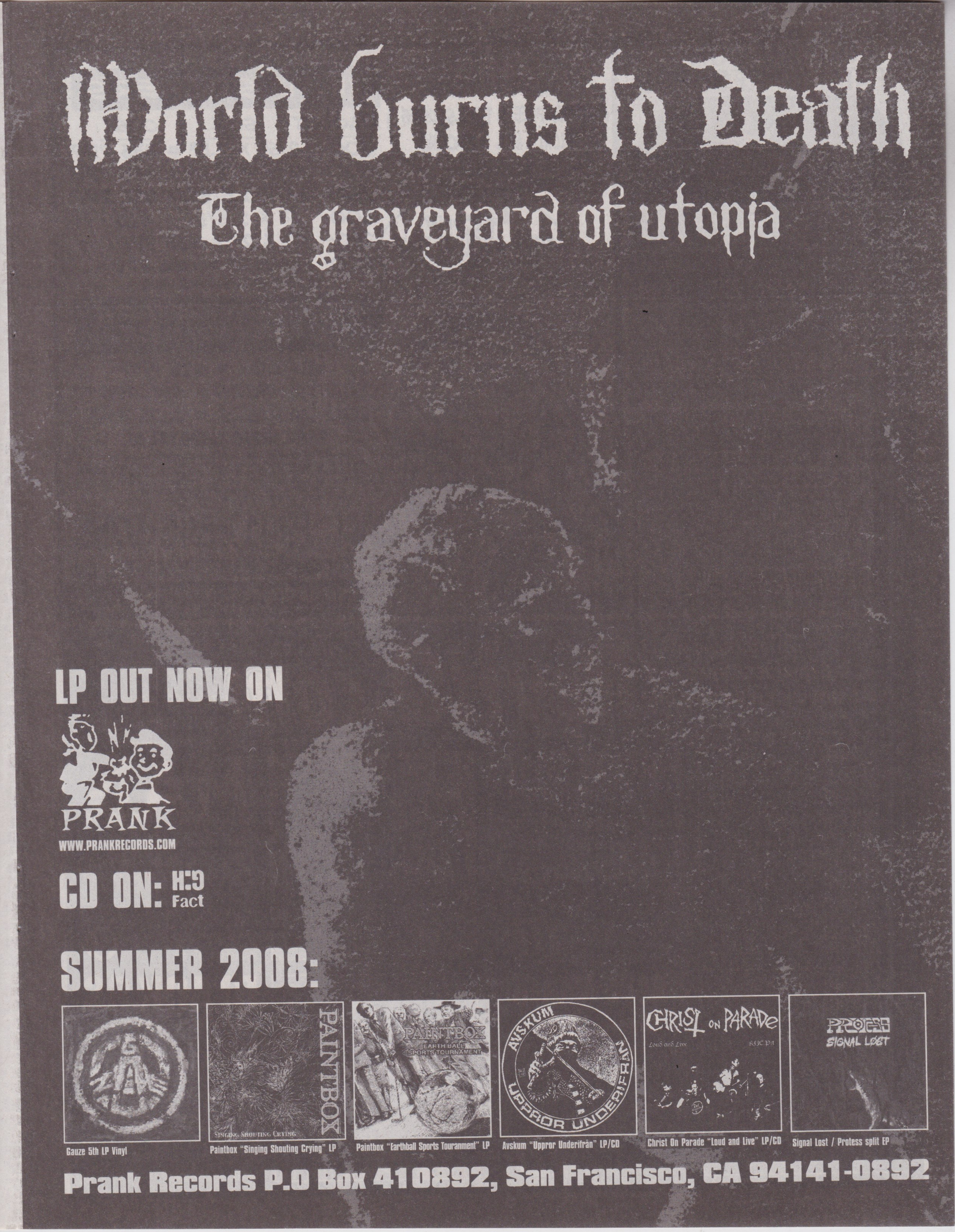
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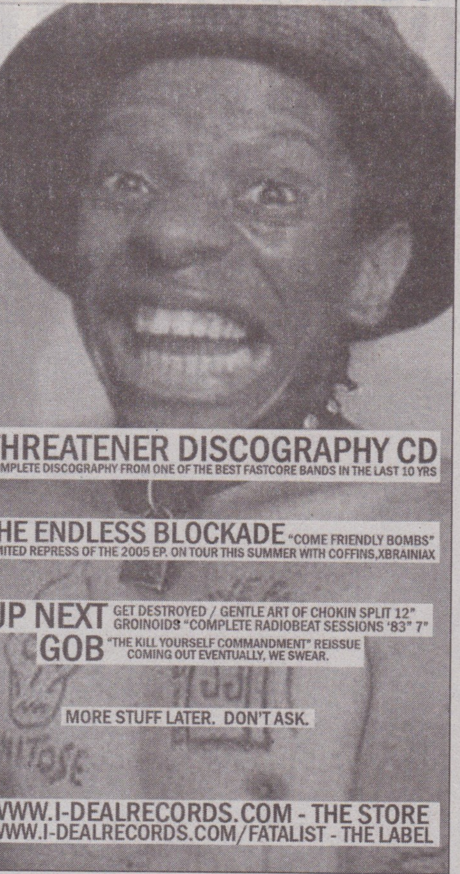

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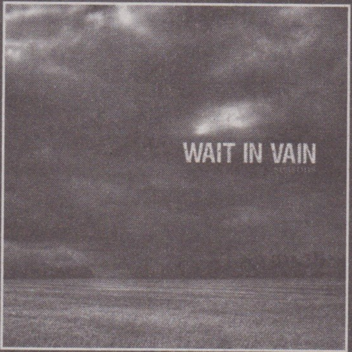

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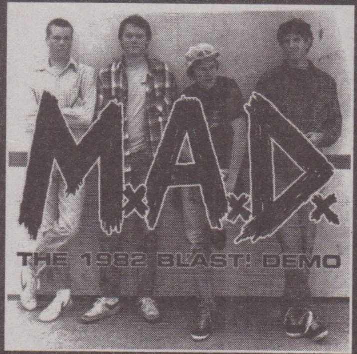

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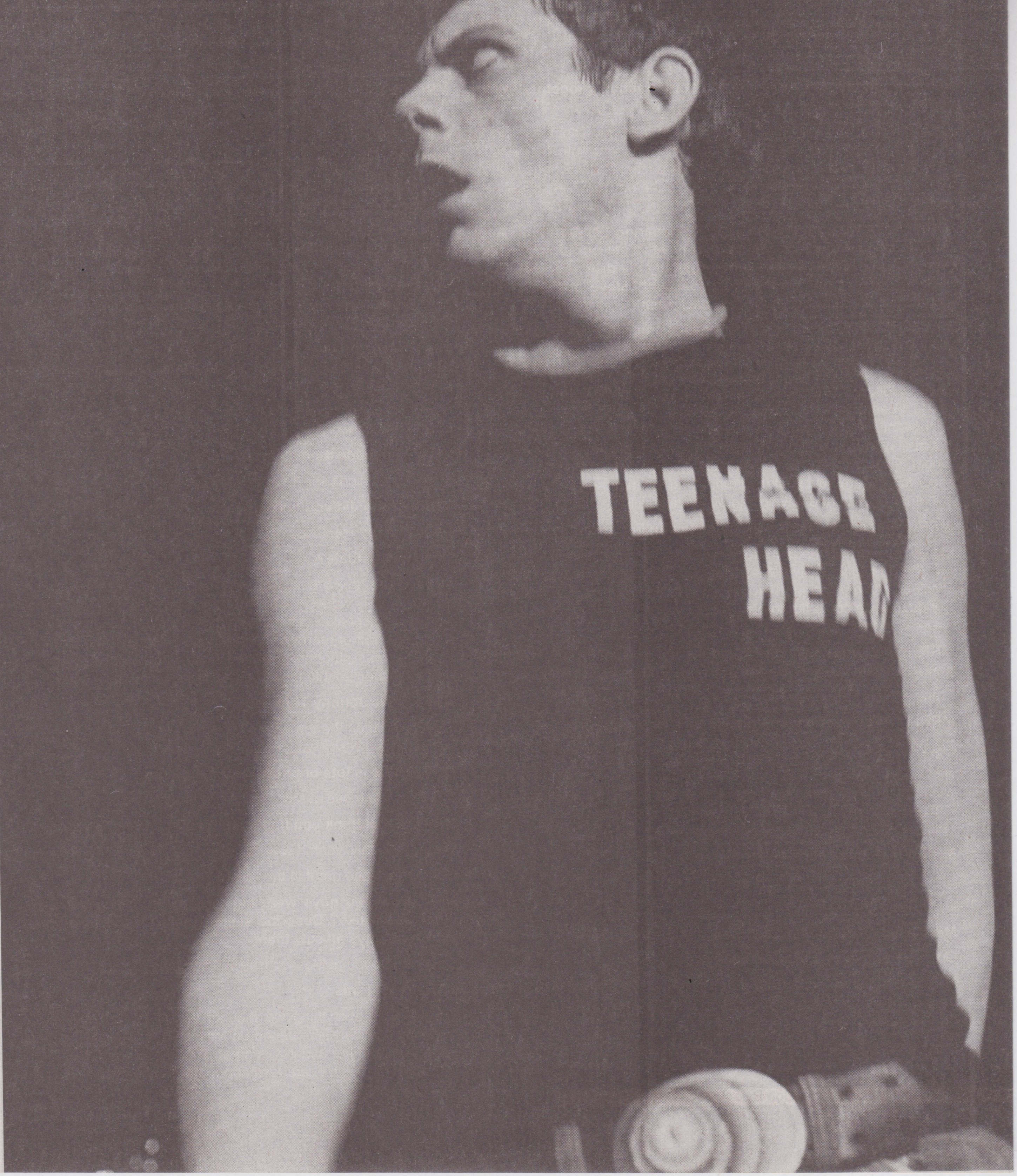
REAPER RECORDS

TEENAGE HEAD



MRR: We are very honored to have with us the greatest rock 'n' roll band to ever come out of Canada, Hamilton's Teenage Head. Now, I believe Teenage Head started with Frank and Gord. You guys were wrestling partners in 9th Grade gym class.

Frankie: And Steve. I got into that much later. You guys were into that Greco holding.

Gord: Westdale High School.

MRR: So, the three of you were avid wrestlers.

Frankie: Oh yeah, right.

MRR: Did you guys share the same musical tastes back then when you were in 9th Grade?

Frankie: Yep.

MRR: Right on. And when did you start practicing together? What grade were you in?

Gord: Well, I was the oldest, so I was the only guy capable of going to the beer store on Longwood Road. It was about 10th Grade. Like you said, we had the same musical preferences: Dolls, Stooges, MC5, Eddie Cochrane, Gene Vincent. We were the only guys in school with tight jeans.

MRR: Back when everyone else was wearing bell-bottoms. A lot of kids don't know that. We used to have to get our moms to take 'em in for us. Frankie, you were originally the drummer with Gord playing guitar, and you rounded out with Steve on bass. What prompted you to move to vocals back then?

Frankie: I broke my wrist and our original drummer, Nick Stipanitz, he filled in and I took over the mic.

Gord: We couldn't find a singer. Nobody wanted to sing. That was the hardest job. Frank started singing when he was playing drums. It was just a three-piece: me, Steve, and Frank. So when Nick came, well, Nick went away for whatever reason and when he came back, Nick could play drums and Frank could move to vocals, so we finally had a singer. Then we just started rehearsing whatever songs off whatever records we were buying at the time, trying to learn the songs, and then eventually we started developing our writing skills.

MRR: What cover songs were you playing in the earliest days?

Gord: You name it. Me and Steve were into the Dolls. I think Frank was into the Beatles and Elvis. Steve was into Sweet and Mott The Hoople. Black Sabbath. Anything that we could learn. You know, Hawkwind… Songs that we could figure out. That's what we would play. As long as we liked them.

MRR: Now, you guys practiced in the basement of Frankie's parents home every Saturday morning. Tell us about that.

Frankie: No.

MRR: Did you ever get complaints by the neighbors?

Frankie: Every Saturday.

Steve: And then the cops would come, but they were really nice. They would say, "Well, look guys, just turn it down a little bit because it is in the middle of the day." And they would actually tell us that we were getting better every time they would come.

MRR: Were some cops better then others?

Steve: They were all nice.

Gord: They got to know us.

MRR: That must have pissed off Frankie's neighbors.

Gord: It was more his mom and dad and the cat.

MRR: Now Steve, back then you started playing bass left-handed on a right-handed Fender precision strung upside-down. How did that happen?

Steve: I didn't know there was a left-handed bass. Gordie had a bass; he was originally a bass player before he got a guitar, so I grabbed that and I just flipped it over and the big E-string was on the bottom, so I just left it.

MRR: I remember you also had a bottle opener on the end of the neck of your bass. It was pretty cool because you could open a beer any place, anytime.

[*loads of laughter*]

Frankie: Good for the intonation.

Steve: There were no twist-offs back then.

MRR: It was either at the end of your bass or your teeth. Your first gig pre-dates the first Sex Pistols gig by six months. Where and when was this gig?

Steve: The high school gig—is that what you mean?

MRR: Yeah. That's what I was told it was.

Steve: 1975, October 19th at our high school at Westdale High School in Hamilton.

MRR: And how did the crowd react?

Steve: It was just the kids from the school. They called it a Coffee House.

Gord: Westdale was a pretty cool school. As a high school, they let us dress the way we wanted to and let us hang out where we wanted to. We never had any problems. No one ever told us we can't do what we were doing. It was kind of unusual to have a band at that time in high school. It was more folk music and things like that. We were never discouraged. It was a pretty cool school.

MRR: I saw you guys play at M&M Robinson and you opened for… I think it was Max Webster at the Delta, and you had these big platform shoes on.

Steve: Platform runners. I got that from Johnny Thunders, but I had to make mine, though.

MRR: You made them yourself.

Steve: They didn't sell them in Hamilton.

MRR: Where did you make them?

Steve: Just in woodshop class.

MRR: In Westdale?

Steve: Yeah, the school was very cool. They encouraged kids to do whatever. This woodshop teacher that I had, he didn't care that I was making speaker cabinets and bracelets and running shoes. I just took a pair of runners and sanded off the soles with a grinder so that it was smooth, and then made the wood platform and contact cemented it to the shoe and then painted it all white.

MRR: …a la Johnny Thunders.

Steve: And then the top ended up ripping and I just pitched them somewhere. I wish I would have kept them.

MRR: There is lots of photo documentation.

Steve: I wore those at M&M Robinson, that's right.

MRR: Yeah. I think you had them on at the Delta Theatre, too.

Steve: Probably, yeah. I was milking it. I looked cool.

Gord: They were great in the winter.

MRR: Now you guys were big fans of the New York Dolls. What was it like? Describe seeing them for the first time. I know you guys all saw them.

Steve: Were you at Massey Hall that first time?

MRR: Yeah, I was.

Gord: It was everything we thought it would be. It was great. It's funny. I know Kiss opened up for them and they had all their explosions and fire and it was great. They were great. But, I'll tell you what—I couldn't care less about the bombs, I wanted to see the Dolls.

photo on previous page: Don Pyle

MRR: Yeah, that was when "Too Much Too Soon" came out. Did you guys see the Stooges?

Gord: I saw Iggy at the Victory Burlesque. That show changed my life. There was no doubt about it. I had never seen anything like that before. That was the most incredible thing to ever see.

Steve: That pre-dated the Dolls.

MRR: Yeah, I think that must have been before.

Gord: That was incredible.

MRR: Now, the name Teenage Head is taken from the second Flamin' Groovies album. Whose idea was it to use this for your band?

Gord: Well, I had the magazine. I had bought *Creem*. It was actually a 1971 issue. That's where I first saw the name of the album and it was the first subscription to *Creem Magazine*. If you paid your $3.00 or whatever, you had a choice of albums to buy. I mean, you got it for free. One was Frut, a Detroit band I think. The other was "Teenage Head" by the Flamin' Groovies. And I just remember in '71—I would have been 14 years old or something—I thought "Oh, what a great name for a band." I just kind of held onto it until we got one.

MRR: I know at one point Teenage Head was a five-piece with Sparky, and he eventually left. Did he leave you guys to join Simply Saucer, or was it the other way around?

Gord: No, I think we decided that for some reason we wanted to just be a four-piece and he was great—t was just kind of a thing that we felt we should do. And actually it was a good move, because that is when we started playing more. We went to New York City. Whatever chemistry we had as the four of us was a big difference.

MRR: Now, in the mid-'70s, the Musicians' Union was booking you guys into Youth Detention Centres outside of Hamilton. What do you remember of those gigs?

Gord: We were just glad to get a gig. Again, we were only 17 or 18 years old. Just the fact that we got paid....

Steve: That was long before we came here and played Crash 'n' Burn. That was just the genesis of where we played our first five gigs. The first one was our high school and the next four were Detention Centres. One in Oakville, one in Hagersville....

MRR: I think a lot of people out there don't realize that Teenage Head was a rock 'n' roll band long before punk rock came around. I don't think you guys intentionally wanted to be a punk rock band. I think the scene here claimed you guys as theirs.

Steve: Well, you've got to remember that when Iggy and the Stooges and the Dolls and MC5 were around, it wasn't called punk rock, right?

MRR: Yeah.

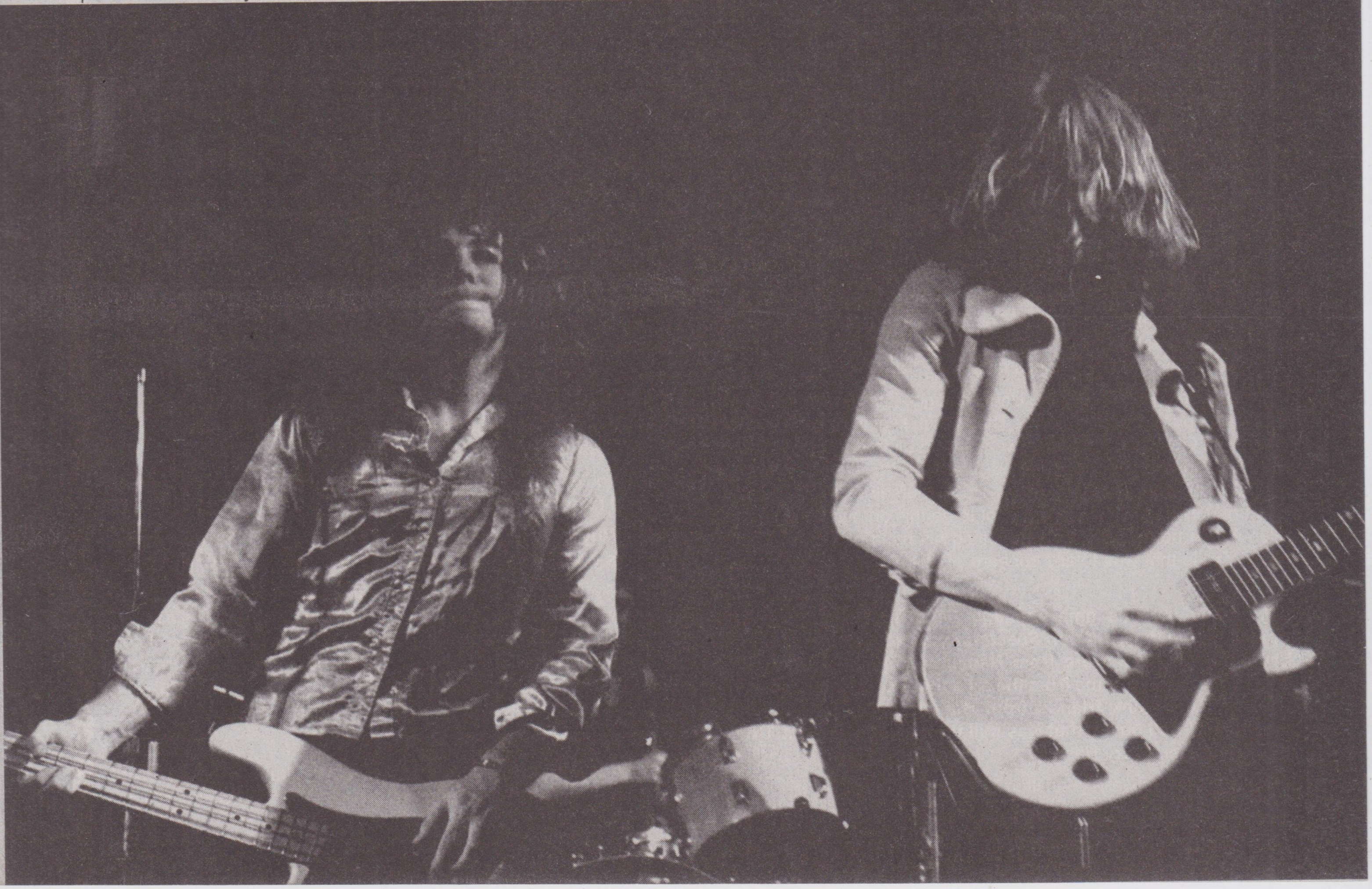
Steve: Punk rock came afterwards when it was the Damned and the Dead Boys and the Ramones and stuff.

MRR: On the earliest Teenage Head recordings, Slash Booze was always credited for inspiration. Who is Slash Booze?

Steve: Brian Baird. A good friend of ours. We went to high school with him and he was one of the first guys to have a job so there was money for partying. He was really generous with what he had. He liked to have a good time and he would come to all our gigs and he was our number one fan and also had a great taste in music. He turned me onto a lot of music that I had never heard before.

MRR: I talked to him about a lot of really old rockabilly gigs in Hamilton; I didn't know that Link Wray played there. He was quite a wealth of knowledge.

photo below: Don Pyle



Steve: Yeah, some guys just really absorb all that stuff.

MRR: I always thought that was the inspiration part.

Steve: Well, if you saw him jump off the balcony at the Colonial Tavern, you'd see he knew how to have a good time.

MRR: Tell us about that. You guys were playing the Colonial upstairs and I think he used to join you when you played "Pills," the Bo Diddley song.

Steve: He was a guitar player. Frank would always call him up for that. He jumped right off the balcony. It didn't turn out all that well. He survived.

MRR: But he did the song before he went to the…

Frankie: That's when he decided to go on pills.

MRR: So he could sing the song with true conviction. I know in *Shades Magazine* in 1977, Andy Payne wrote a piece about Teenage Head in there, and he was kind of complaining about Teenage Head's Hamilton disciples who came down to Toronto and messed with the Toronto crowd. The Hamiltonians brought a bunch of roughnecks.

Steve: It was a working town. Let's face it. It certainly wasn't OCA. That's just the people that came from there. They were hardcore. They knew we were their band. You know how we have the Ti-Cats and Argos rivalry. That was that same thing. There was Teenage Head and then there was the Viletones and stuff. Our fans didn't take no shit. There was some pretty wicked Viletones fans, too.

Gord: The Viletones show at the Underground—that was the beginning of the whole punk thing in Toronto. That was it. I know there were things going on at OCA and that's how we were first introduced to it, but the Viletones show at the Underground, that was the first time you saw posters on poles. It was your whole Do It Yourself attitude. It was the first introduction I had. Look it, we got to do this on our own. He found a club where he talked a guy into letting his band play there, playing original music that was totally unheard of at the time. It was all cover bands.

MRR: Frank, by this time Teenage Head started getting really popular, and in the *Hamilton Spectator* you were quoted as saying "Everyone we knew were from Hamilton. Definitely a lot of the scene from Toronto came from the art school, and we would trudge in with all our punk friends from Hamilton. There was trouble sometimes." So I guess that was still the crossover effect. Do you guys remember Crazy Harry?

Steve: Oh sure. He was a Hamilton kid. Sure.

MRR: He was one of the ones that scared or freaked out the…

Steve: He wore the chain off a chainsaw. He wore it around his neck or something.

MRR: Yeah. His mother had a beauty salon in Westdale, I remember.

Steve: Yeah, that's right. At the corner of Macland and King. I don't think he is with us anymore.

MRR: No, he's not. He passed away about eight years ago.

Frankie: He was a great guy.

MRR: Yeah he was a great guy.

Frankie: Three kegs Harry.

Steve: He used to have a bag of bennies, just to keep him awake.

MRR: Who did you guys play at the Crash 'n' Burn with? Do you remember?

Gord: It was just us. We closed the place. They had already lost their liquor license—if they ever had one—and we were the last band that played there.

MRR: And you guys played at David's also?

Gord: David's came in after and that lasted for about a year. We played there about two or three times. That did go on for about a year.

MRR: They had all those funny statues in there and stuff.

Gord: Yeah. DOA played there, so Toronto was starting to become known as a center for this type of music.

MRR: The band was getting really popular. It seemed in Toronto more so than in Hamilton, and again, Frank, you told the *Hamilton Spectator* around that time that "Hamilton was a bed and a stove to us. We do most of our playing in Toronto. There just isn't the market for our music in Hamilton." But that changed quite soon after didn't it?

Frankie: Yes. I miss Toronto, but I love the Hammer.

MRR: Yeah, I do too. I think that's what makes you guys the great rock 'n' roll band that you are coming from a place like that. The people from Hamilton do listen to pretty hard music, especially back then, as you said, it was all Dictators, MC5, Stooges….

Gord: Yeah. And the record stores had those albums, too.

MRR: I remember there used to be a pretty weird guy at Star Records that wore a Star Trek outfit or something. He did like a solo thing.

Gord: Wheel Base.

MRR: Yeah, Wheel Base. And I remember, when I was about 15, I went in there and I bought King Crimson *Red* and the first Stooges album, and he told me I couldn't buy them both. I had to put one back. So I kept the Stooges. He wanted me to buy the King Crimson record.

Steve: Can I answer your question earlier about who opened up for us at Crash 'n' Burn? It was Wheel Base.

Gord: You're right. All he had was reel-to-reel tape recorders chained together.

MRR: Why do you think it was easier to play in Toronto back then, as opposed to Hamilton?

Gord: Because there was something going on. There was a downtown core. The punk thing was developing. There was a place to play. There was an audience. There may have only been 100 or 200 people, but still an audience. And a lot of people don't realize that Crash 'n' Burn only ran for about six weeks. It wasn't a very long time, so it would be the same 100 people each week.

MRR: And it was just weekends too.

Gord: And then the suburban kids, that's what I noticed… The suburban kids started to come from North York and Scarborough,

and that's when you can start to tell that this thing was growing.

Steve: And there was a lot of media attention in Toronto. There were lots of sub-grade newspapers that were always writing about punk. You could always just pick up a magazine anytime and you would see a picture of Leckie or Frank or whatever. Hamilton just had the *Spec*. That was it. It took them a long time to write that article. So that summer, everybody knew that new wave and punk had hit. It landed here.

MRR: December '77, I think, was the first time they quoted you guys.

Gord: Like you said, we were already playing for a couple of years. We kind of had a head start on everybody anyways, so when we joined the scene we already had two years under our belt. We had already written ten songs. It was very easy. It was perfect timing for us. It couldn't have been better.

MRR: I thought it was very cool the way you and Steve had never cut your hair.

Gord: No, but Frank did. We were mad at him for doing that.

Steve: He had cut it for all of us.

MRR: When I saw the pictures at Star Records, as a five-piece, Frank sort of had more of a David Bowie haircut back then.

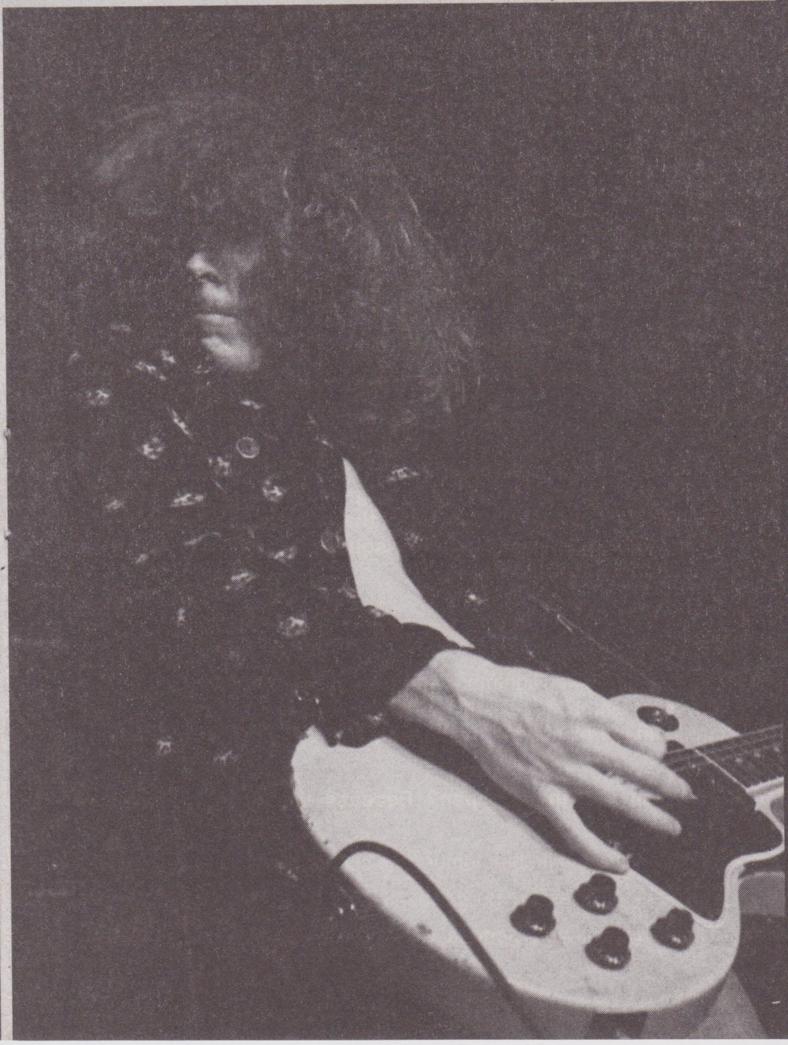
Steve: Great Bowie haircut.

MRR: When you guys were all glamed-out.

Gord: Well, no, that was still the New York Dolls influence.

MRR: In the summer of '77, you guys jumped in a car bound for New York City. Along for the ride was Nazi Dog of the Viletones. The mission was to confront Hilly Kristal and secure a gig at CBGB's.

photo below: Don Pyle



Tell us about that.

Steve: Mission accomplished. It took about ten seconds. We went to the front door. There was Hilly sitting there on his stool. We told him about our band and our idea and he goes "Sure. Come on down and play."

MRR: Now, you guys just drove down there…

Steve: There was no money. It was just like, "Of course you can come and play." Maybe he knew who we were. Maybe it was already set up. We don't really know. There was certainly no flack. It was just like that. "Sure, you guys can play."

Gord: And we were lucky enough, because whatever happened, whatever he did, he put us on the bill with the Cramps—the original Cramps, who didn't have a record deal at the time but were pretty hip as far as that New York scene was. And so therefore we played two nights at CBGB's and it was packed because it was a great bill. And there was media there. *Melody Maker* from England was there, *Variety* was there. So somebody told somebody about something and for some reason that whole Toronto thing going down there meant something to somebody for Hilly to put us on a good bill like that. He could have just tossed us on a Monday night, you know, "Here you go."

MRR: So what nights did he give you?

Gord: We did a weekend. It was a Friday and Saturday with the Cramps.

MRR: So it was the Viletones, Teenage Head, and the Cramps?

Gord: Yeah. That was the bill. I think some other bands were added later, but that was it.

Steve: Didn't the Diodes go and get their car stolen?

Gord: Yeah, I think something like that.

MRR: And the New Yorkers, how did they take to you guys?

Steve: Great, I thought. There was never no…

Gord: Yeah. We met all types of people there. People from Boston. Whatever was going on in New York, it was a great time. It was fantastic. I am so glad that I was able to go down there at that time because that is when New York was New York and that is when CBGB's really was CBGB's. It was just after the Ramones, so it wasn't in the raw time. They had already established themselves as being this cool place to be. And we were lucky enough to play there at the time.

MRR: Was Joey Ramone at those gigs? I know he was a big fan of you guys.

Gord: I don't recall if he was.

Steve: I think they were probably already on tour by then.

Gord: They played so much.

Steve: They were gone.

MRR: What about when you went down to book the gig with Hilly? Did you go down there, book the gig, and come right back? I mean, it would have been one of your first times down there.

Steve: It was the first time. We stayed at the Times Square Motor Hotel and Steve was with us. It was an eye-opening experience.

Gord: It was pretty bad and we were only twenty years old so it was quite established as far as a memory. No doubt about it.

Steve: Was that when we went to see Suicide? Did we go see Suicide play somewhere?

Gord: At Max's.

Steve: Was that on the same trip possibly? Like, "What are we going to do tonight? We got the gig, now we are here in New York for the night."

Gord: We went to Max's.

MRR: Was Alan Vega swinging his chains around?

Gord: No, he was just Frankie Teardrop [*starts humming*].

Steve: Me and Gordie saw Andy Warhol and Cyrinda Fox on the

street right around the corner from Max's. We were just walking along and Gordie recognized him. I recognized Cyrinda Fox right away. And, as it turns out, I got Cyrinda Fox's autograph. I didn't even think about asking Andy Warhol for his autograph [*laughter*].

Gord: Who is he?

MRR: You were just looking at Cyrinda.

Steve: I forgot we even met Andy Warhol until Gordie reminded me a couple of years ago. "Remember who she was with? That was Andy Warhol."

MRR: Actually, I think Cyrinda died a few years ago. She had cancer unfortunately. It's too bad. I guess she would have left Johanssen by that time…

Steve: Her autograph says 'Cyrinda Fox-Johanssen.'

MRR: OK. That was back when Roxene was doing all those pictures.

Steve: She was in so much. She was as famous as any of the bands were.

MRR: Yeah. She was really quite striking. Now, in Boston, you guys tried to play at a club, but got kicked out after you spilled some beer on borrowed equipment. What happened there?

Steve: Isn't that stupid to think that we would go all that way to play in Boston? We had a radio station guy, Oedipus, some huge DJ who was hip to the band, and then because of something like this beer getting tipped over on something, obviously not intentionally…

MRR: And probably does happen quite often during rock 'n' roll shows.

Steve: Somebody had it in for us, when you really think about it. Here we are in this hotel room in Boston…

Gord: Yeah it wasn't quite the CBGB's trip. It was a little reality check.

MRR: This was the Rat club?

Gord: Yeah.

MRR: And what was the band that gave you the hard time?

Steve: Johnny Barnes. Did you say you saw his name in a Boston compilation? He was probably somebody in the Boston scene.

MRR: He might have been on the *Live at the Rat* album, but you know what? I'm not really sure about that.

Steve: Nice guy. [*laughter*]

MRR: We won't say anything more about Johnny Barnes.

Steve: We never ever did go back to Boston.

MRR: I heard a story, though—I remember, back in the day, that you guys played in Boston. Maybe it wasn't Boston, or maybe it was fictitious, but Frank, you were swinging on some water pipe in a club and it broke while the gig was going on and water started squirting out.

Frankie: Boston.

MRR: So that was Boston? So, you guys did play there a second time, maybe, because I heard back in the '70s about this.

Gord: I think that was during a sound-check. Were you swinging on water pipes during the sound-check? I think so. And it wasn't just a beer spilling, it was…You know, Frank is right. It was Boston, and that was it.

Steve: We *did* deserve to get thrown out.

Gord: And I don't think this Johnny Barnes guy…he was just a guitar guy and I don't think… I get the feeling that he just didn't want to have us on the same bill after that.

Steve: Had he done this pipe thing, I can sort of see, maybe… You know, boys, it is a little bit too much.

Gord: We were asked to leave.

Frankie: But we did stay the week.

Steve: Well, the weekend.

MRR: So much for Boston. Do you guys recall New Year's Eve, 1978, the Welland Hotel?

Steve: I do. I think about that a lot.

Gord: Did the Forgotten Rebels play too?

MRR: I think… Well, I was going to ask you. I remember the Forgotten Rebels, the Existers, and the Sophisticatos.

Steve: Good archiving.

MRR: And I remember most of the crowd there was from Toronto.

Steve: You're right.

MRR: And then after the gig we all went to a motor inn and had a party until about 9:00 o'clock in the morning.

Steve: Yeah, there were people there from Toronto that didn't have a room, and were just like, "What do we do now? It's January 1st. It's kind of cold out." In the summer, you can kind of just crash in the woods but…

MRR: I remember that night, too, after the gig I saw Tank, who was passed out in the lobby with a bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken. Why did you guys play Welland? Was that the only place you could get a New Year's Eve gig? I thought you would have been in Toronto or Hamilton.

Steve: We might have been in between playing Toronto and Hamilton. I don't know what would have been the Toronto place to play at the end of '78. I don't know what was left. We might have already just been there and hitting the Southern Ontario circuit.

Gord: It was probably nice to just go do another town. Big time. Spreading our wings.

MRR: Now, there was a really cool gig at the Horseshoe in 1978 where you guys played with Destroy All Monsters featuring the Stooges' Ron Ashton, and Suicide. The crowd was clearly there to see you guys, from what I could see. Do you guys remember anything from that night?

Steve: It's interesting because I didn't know that all three of those groups were on that same bill. You told me that earlier. Suicide?

MRR: No, you guys played with them. I remember people were throwing chairs at them one night and another night …

Gord: That was great. I mean, the Horseshoe and the bands that came from New York. Every week there would be some cool band playing in downtown Toronto. It was fantastic. The Heartbreakers, the Dictators, Blondie.

MRR: And it was almost seven nights a week back then.

Gord: To see the Heartbreakers at the Horseshoe…

MRR: …doing their twenty minute set.

Gord: Yeah. With a lot of tuning. It was still great.

MRR: They were fantastic. I remember, again, the night you played with Suicide and Destroy All Monsters, that Mike Nightmare of the Ugly kept squirting Alan Vega with a squirt-gun and then he got really upset and walked off stage.

Gord: Yeah, well.

Steve: Welcome to T.O.

Gord: I remember Mike Nightmare getting hail-bailed by Phil Lynott of Thin Lizzy. Cuff him. Like, hook him and he was out cold. I guess Mike said something to Phil and Phil being the tough Irishman just whacked him.

MRR: Did you see that happen? Because I've heard different stories.

Gord: Oh, I was there. I just remember the commotion going on…

Steve: It was at the Crash 'n' Burn, wasn't it?

MRR: Thin Lizzy played Seneca College that night with Be-Bop

Deluxe and he came down to the Crash 'n' Burn. I thought he had his roadies with him too, so I wasn't sure. Some people have said that they helped take Mike out. I wasn't there so I didn't see it. Now, you guys toured the US, I guess it was your first official tour of the US. What was it like when you guys would get to a truck stop or something like that? Was everything cool?**

Steve: Well, actually we were just talking about that on the way here. It was more the Canadian West that you would have us going into a tavern in somewhere like Red Deer to get a six pack, and Gord has got pink ostrich boots on and he's got make-up from the night before…

Gord: All dolled up.

Steve: And we would walk in and there would be a "Where did these guys come from?" Hurry up. Get out of here. In the States, not so much.

MRR: I heard this great story about you guys returning from one of your US tours—you tried to cross at the Detroit border and as you were going through customs, the guard discovered your cache of alcohol and said you had no problem coming in but you had to pay $115 duty. So what did you guys do?

Steve: Well, we said we will drive through the States and come back through Buffalo.

MRR: So you could consume the alcohol instead of pay for it.

Steve: Yeah.

Gord: We'll show you. We'll just go back and drink it all and then we'll come back across.

MRR: Did you drink it all?

Gord: Well, yeah, and we did take the long way home.

MRR: Down to Miami and back.

Gord: All I remember is being in Cleveland and trying to figure out how to get back. But that was our attitude. We'll show you.

Steve: That was probably Slash Booze and he probably had mega money so he probably bought lots of good stuff. That was the 4th of July, because when we drove back up through Buffalo, the Stones were playing at Rich Stadium that night. I remember that. That was whatever year that Stones gig happened.

MRR: "Black and Blue" or "Some Girls."

Steve: I don't know.

Gord: That was in about the tenth hour to get home and we would have been home in three.

MRR: Who was driving the van on that?

Steve: It might have been Kovac.

MRR: So there would have been Kovac, Stewart, Pollack, Slash Booze, and the four of you guys.

Gord: Yeah. That's a lot but that's very possibly it. Like I said, a lot of Pabst Blue.

MRR: In the summer of 1978, you guys released your first 7" single, *Picture My Face/Tearin' Me Apart* on Epic/IMG. These were different recordings than the versions that would be released on the debut LP. Tell us about those recordings.

Gord: At that time, 45s were still a viable way of selling music. I understand what would have happened was, "Let's record two songs. Let's put out a 45." You know, see how it does. You tested the market with 45s sometimes. And so we just went in and recorded those two songs and that was the whole idea. It was just more to test the waters, I'm pretty sure. That's why we went in and just did those two songs separately. And then, we went in later and did a five-song demo, preparing for a full album.

MRR: So the five-song demo, has that ever been released?

Gord: Actually, that is where "Picture My Face" comes from on the original album—from that five-song demo.

MRR: And what about the other four tracks. Have they ever been by the public?

Gord: No.

MRR: Wow. Well, I hope they do.

Gord: Yeah, well, there is a lot of stuff like that, and the idea is to get that somehow and make that into something tangible. Actually, we have tons of material that has never been released.

MRR: There are some incredible live tapes that I have heard. Live at the Delta Theatre doing "Little Doll" by the Stooges and a lot of really cool covers. Is there any chance that we will see that stuff come out?

Gord: Oh yeah. Especially now in the digital world, you don't even have to release something. You can put it out digitally as well, make it available. Once we get a handle on more of how that all works—it is very time-consuming and it is new. I think there is an opportunity to make that stuff available. It is a lot more realistic today then it was ten years ago.

MRR: There is incredible stuff. There are tapes flying around of Teenage Head live at Heatwave that are unbelievable. That is super cool.

Steve: Thank you. That was done on eight-track by Doug Comfort of Comfort Sound.

MRR: That is great. You guys were really, really good that day. And also there is a Q107 live gig and I believe you took a B-side for one of your singles from that.

Gord: That was in 1978.

MRR: Less than a year after you put out the single, you released the full-length on Epic/IGM. I remember back then that you had enough material to put out an album much sooner. Why did it take so long? I mean, you guys had the material before so many other bands. Even before the Diodes,

I think you guys had stuff.

Gord: Well, you had to get signed. You had to get someone to put up the money to get recorded. You have to remember, back then, it was very expensive to record. We had to go into 24-track studios, you had to pay top dollar. There was no way around it. You couldn't do something at home on a computer, which you can today. It was a very expensive venture, so you couldn't actually… To do a full-length album was a major project.

MRR: I don't think kids nowadays realize what it costs. It is so easy to get a CD out there now.

Steve: It's a different world.

MRR: It was just really expensive to put things out back then. IGM I guess financed the first single, along with the album.

Gord: Yeah.

MRR: So it was more of a financial thing. It could have been a blessing in a sense, where you guys just kept on getting better and better and better and by the time you recorded it was…

Gord: And also, you think of the bands that were around at the time, nobody really did get signed. Everything was all very independent. It was all very different in Toronto then, say, it was in New York and London. The labels weren't signing bands. They kind of just wanted this thing to blow over. Make it disappear somehow. And it didn't. So therefore that's why you don't see a lot of bands. They were all actually independent releases. They all did them themselves. Even our album was independent. It wasn't signed to a major. The only band that got signed to a major was the Diodes.

MRR: CBS.

Gord: Yeah. And when you think about New York and you think about London, think about all the bands that got signed to majors. In London, the Sex Pistols, the Buzzcocks, Clash, and on and on. Think about New York. Talking Heads, Blondie, the Ramones. I mean, in Toronto, there was nothing.

MRR: Yeah, you know, it's funny, too, because a lot of the bands, the New York bands, the first place they would come and play would be Toronto or Boston, but we never… Do you think the bands here got a fair shake? Do you think we got slagged off because we were Canadian?

Gord: I think the industry wasn't really paying attention just by the fact that they didn't sign anybody. I think all you have to do is look at the Juno Awards in 1978, 1979, and 1980, and see who won the Juno Awards, and you see if there is anything on there resembling…

MRR: I wouldn't even have the wildest guess who was on.

Gord: Yeah, well, take a look. I really believe that was the attitude of the industry towards this music.

Steve: You think of a guy like Seymour Stein. He had the smarts to hear what Blondie was doing. Madonna, too. Same with the Ramones. There were no guys like that in Canada that were hip to that street-level stuff. A band that had actual, real talent. You had people signing Zon or somebody. Nobody had any sense of that cool sound.

MRR: Now, a lot of critics, Toronto people, more of your hardcore fans, had the opinion that the recording of the first album didn't represent the live spectacle, and I am sure you guys got that feedback.

Steve: That's a really common sort of observation that people have about high-energy kind of bands. You could say the same thing about the MC5. You could say the same thing about the New York Dolls. You could say the same thing about…you know, the Stooges records were great but it's never the same on the record. They always say that. Well, they are two different things.

MRR: See, I was told you guys hated it. I love the way it turned out.

Gord: But then we were young and naïve. I listen to it now and I wouldn't change a thing on it. But 30 years ago, I couldn't stand listening to it. It's perception and you don't realize…

Steve: I think in all honesty, what you like are the performances and songs. But it was never put together with the right guy to produce it. Whereas, with the Ramones, they had people in New York that understood the way the Ramones record sounded was awesome. We kind of felt like shit. We played as good as those guys.

Gord: That was the attitude. There is no doubt about it. They are going to chince on your presentation and production, and again, I think back to what the producer Alan Caddy did and where he came from. What he did as a producer, I don't know, I think his hands were tied as far as tones, but the production value is there. There is a lot of good edits. There is a lot of dynamics on that album, musically. I really do think it was him. He got me to do little harmony lines on guitar, things that I wouldn't have thought of. So he did really try. But he was in the same boat as we were. He was probably not with the right people. The cheap record company, you know—let's just do this thing and put it out. They didn't chince on the artwork though.

MRR: The artwork is good and it is incredible the dynamics that you did get. Even with the way something like "Curtain Jumper" kicks in. That's beautiful.

Gord: That's it. That is a very good comparison. If you compare "Curtain Jumper" off the original as compared to the remixed version, there are no dynamics. There is nothing there. The original has got something from beginning to end.

Steve: He had something going.

Gord: Yeah, he did.

Steve: But as far as re-tracking that album, there is this guy in the booth and we knew he wasn't into it. You just got that vibe.

Gord: Those days, if you brought a Marshall cabinet into the studio, you would get "You're not going to play through that, are you?"

MRR: That's what we were saying last night about playing here.

Gord: But now it is an industry standard. Every studio has a Marshall cabinet and a head. Back then, it was like you were bringing in the most offensive amplifier ever created by man.

Steve: "And why are you using that to record with? Come on, you can get a low wattage amplifier to do the same thing." Until we got Stacey Headon… There was something that happened with Stacey and that's when we had a good working environment, when we made *Frantic City*. You can tell the difference in the sound, right?

MRR: For those who don't know who Stacey Headon is, he played with David Bowie on *Station to Station* and I believe he was on the *Lust for Life* tour.

Gord: No, that was Gardener and the Sales Brothers. *TV Eye*, he was part of that. Do you remember that live album? The red live album? He was part of that.

MRR: Now, how many times has the first Teenage Head album been mixed? I mean, there is the original IGM, then it came out on Other People's Music remixed. Then I think the CD release from about ten years ago or whatever it was, I think it was redone again. Peter Moore and Chris Spedding were involved in that.

Gord: Yeah. Yuck.

Steve: But they wouldn't have been able to remix it. They could only put it into the computer and change the treble or bass. It was the same mix as they were working from the tapes. And then they got a hold of a couple of other tracks. There are two versions of "Lucy Potato," I think.

MRR: Yeah there are. I think there are two versions of "Tearin' Me Apart," too. I like the original IGM the best. A re-mastered version of "Top Down" made it on to radio in the summer on 1979 and made the Top Ten. I guess when that made waves on Q107, I guess that's when you decided to re-master the album?

Steve: Re-mix. That was us just still being stubborn, you know. This album didn't sound like…

MRR: And did that version sell more than the IGM one?

Gord: No the IGM one… That's an interesting thing, too. Steve found this out. That first album, the IGM version, the first original album, it was deleted June 2nd, 1980, the day that we had the riot at Ontario Place. So, here is the label, having already sold 20,000 copies, which isn't too bad, they were punching a hole in it the day that we had a riot at Ontario Place with, whatever, 5,000 or 7,000 people there. There is again the insanity of the recording industry and their perception of this type of music. We had to knock down a lot of walls. And then to start touring and crossing the country, that was the first time. I really think we knocked down a lot of doors for a lot of bands to be able to go into clubs and play. It suddenly was OK to book a new wave or a punk rock band.

MRR: Well, actually, when you guys had the riot at Ontario Place, you closed down the doors for DEVO, Blondie, I think. Everything that was remotely considered a new wave or punk was cancelled for that summer. One of my favorite times seeing you play, and I certainly didn't expect it to be, was when you played a huge festival at Mosport Race Track back with the Talking Heads, B52's, the Pretenders, Rockpile. The Clash were supposed to be there but didn't show up. And it was called Heat Wave. You guys went on at 10:00 a.m. sharp and put on a killer show. I always wondered, did you guys stay up all night or did you get up really early and play? Because you guys were pretty energetic and I thought "Teenage Head, these guys don't get up this early for anything."

Steve: I guess we were just young and excited and we got some sleep.

Gord: It was pretty sedate and everyone stayed at this hotel in Oshawa. There was no partying. Everyone was just in their rooms. It was kind of boring and we just wanted to get to our rooms and get to sleep. There was nothing going on at all.

MRR: Now, did you guys do a sound check the day before?

Gord: Yeah, we did, for some reason.

MRR: What was it like that morning when you flew in on the helicopter and saw that huge crowd waiting for you?

Steve: It was different, that's for sure.

MRR: It wasn't like playing Larry's Hideaway… On your live record, I believe it came out on Ready Records, there is a great picture of Frank jumping in the air, looking out at the crowd. That's actually a great live record. That's a really hard record to find, one of the hardest Teenage Head records to find.

Steve: So I hear, yeah.

MRR: When you guys played the Last Pogo, that was a pretty crazy night. You went on at the very end, and in the movie, Steve is with an undercover officer and you are having a very heated conversation. What were you guys saying to each other?

Steve: He was saying, "We're done." That was all. He was trying to get us off the stage. And I think that was prior to us even doing the two songs.

MRR: I thought you only did one song. I think you tried to play "Picture My Face" and…

Steve: I guess it was my luck because that is where the stage door was. The bass player is the first guy he sees and I was just drunk enough to not give a shit.

MRR: And what people don't know was that the place got trashed that night and then the next night was the artsy night with the Everglades and Rough Trade.

Steve: Is that right?

MRR: Yeah. They had to follow that one up.

Steve: We were on a train to Oromucto the next day. That's another story.

MRR: Well, I was going to ask you guys about that. You guys went on a tour of Eastern Canada that I believe Jack Morrow sent you guys on. I'd like to hear about that, because it was a very different reaction that you were getting elsewhere…

Steve: Yeah, he had three weeks. We had one week in Oromucto, one week in Fredericton, and one week in Rishibuctu.

MRR: I don't even know where that is.

Steve: Yeah, well, it is the East Coast of New Brunswick.

MRR: Did you guys play Halifax after that?

Steve: Not on that tour. It was just the three weeks. You know, you can imagine a week in one place. They don't even want you there for five minutes and you are there for a week.

Gord: Again, this was just the mentality. You picture that. There is a punk rock riot, a closing of the Horseshoe, and some say we are the top band of whatever is going on, so what do you do? You send them to Oromucto. That's how you get their career going. Oromucto. Big sales. Oh, big college town, Oromucto. Ridiculous.

Steve: You know what happened when we got there? We played one set or something like that, and the club owner just said, "That's it. I don't want you playing here anymore, but you got to show up every night if I'm gonna pay you, you have to fulfill your contract and be sitting on the edge of the stage for the rest of the week." We did that.

Gord: He had probably paid a deposit or paid in full, so he couldn't get his money back, so what he did is made us show up every single night to drink beer or eat pizza and play pool, but we had to be there from 9:30 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Just forced to be there for the next six nights.

photo below: Don Pyle

MRR: Yeah, it's five songs and I think they re-recorded it again. They were also on Ready Records.

Steve: Wasn't the A-side the whole side of a 12"?

MRR: No, it had one 30-second song called "Oh Well."

Steve: I would love to get that. It sounded great.

Gord: Didn't you steal that from Kovac?

Steve: No. But that is haunting me.

Gord: I've got it. Maybe I did.

MRR: Gord, you have lectured at McMaster University in Hamilton on the history of punk rock music for the 2AA3 Popular Music course. What's it like lecturing at University?

Gord: I was scared to death.

Frankie: Oh, Professor "Crazy Legs" Lewis.

Gord: No. I really was scared to death. For whatever reason, I was just taking some music courses, so I went to the different schools at McMaster and Mohawk in Hamilton. I just wanted to learn and so that was one of the courses that I took, and because I happened to know the instructor a little bit and I saw in the course curriculum that there was a whole part on punk rock, I just said, 'Look. I play in a band called Teenage Head. I was there. If you want me to say anything to the kids…" I was the oldest one there, obviously. And he said "Sure." And so I did. Like I said, I was scared to death, but it was pretty easy because once I got up there, I just kind of related the whole thing about Elvis dying in '77 and Sid Vicious dying and that's what I related to what was going on in punk rock. Those were two very pivotal moments. So once I got that going, then I knew what I was talking about and so it went OK, but I had to talk for 50 minutes. And the kids loved it. They told me they liked it. It was very positive.

Frankie: Can you take me and him for show and tell?

Gord: They would love you.

Steve: Yeah. I could use the slide projector.

MRR: Professor Venom and Professor Marshall. Now, peope out there know that there is teenagehead.ca and there is information there to get the first two albums which have been re-released on CD.

Gord: The first album. *Frantic City* and *Some Kinda Fun* are distributed by a company called Unidisc in Montreal. It is a very small company. And that was the result of song corporation bankruptcies a few years ago.

MRR: And can people get those through your website?

Gord: They will be able to. It's still a website in development. But it's OK, you know. It's getting there.

MRR: And people should check it out because there are some amazing pictures of Teenage Head there with their platforms and long hair. Really cool stuff. Steve, on New Year's Eve of 1981, Teenage Head opened for Saga and Triumph at Maple Leaf Gardens. You knocked over a complete section of Triumph's lights, which fell onto the security barrier. Did you guys get docked for your pay that night?

Steve: I don't think so. I think we just got away with that somehow. I don't think much damage was done and it certainly was not intentional.

MRR: Yeah. I think you were just too close. You were standing up at the front of the stage.

Steve: That's where the opening bands get shoved, in that little six-inch space of the front of the stage.

Gord: It's a postage stamp.

MRR: What are the chances of us seeing a new album coming out from Teenage Head? The last one we had was *Head Disorder* and that really surprised a lot of people with how good it was.

Steve: I kind of like to wait about twenty years between releases. I think we have another five to wait. We're just having a lot of fun playing our set now. We've got six albums to pull songs from, and we just started practising a couple of songs off our first album that we don't play live too often, like "Ain't Got No Sense" and "Tearin' Me Apart," and it is great to have such a great catalogue of stuff.

Gord: Resources, yeah.

Steve: Not To say that it's not a great thing to put a new record out and it's great that we have twelve new songs, but…

MRR: Is there any chance that the live album will come out?

Gord: Yeah, for sure. We own that one.

MRR: Is there any stuff that didn't get released with that live recording, or is it a complete thing on the album?

Steve: There were other things taped that night but they didn't get produced like the album did. They were just left raw.

MRR: And one thing that I have been hearing about for ten years now and I really hope it is happening is there apparently is a documentary in the works for Teenage Head.

Steve: For quite some time there have been different people filming and interviewing, and nothing seems to really gel. Everybody has great ideas, but there is never any real finish line. You have to be patient in this business.

MRR: Are you guys maintaining or keeping the footage for yourself, or does somebody else have most of it?

Gord: They've got the footage that they did. We haven't come to terms with it and we gave them carte blanche to do stuff and so they have got it all. I think what we are hoping to do is marry the stuff that we have been doing the last few years with that and archival pieces. That is what I am hoping for. But whether everyone is going to agree to that, I don't know.

MRR: How far back does a lot of the footage go? What is the earliest footage? I have seen some stuff from Crash 'n' Burn.

Steve: Good question. When did they start sticking cameras in our faces, '96 maybe?

Gord: Oh, you mean them. Bob and Rick. Yeah, probably mid-'90s, because they were there for *Head Disorder*.

MRR: OK, because I have seen stuff where CBC were filming you guys in '77.

Gord: Again, it is just kind of a Herculean task to put all that stuff together, and what I am finding out is the whole editing process is quite elaborate. To put all that that stuff together is quite a job. You have to watch everything in real time, right, to know what is on there.

MRR: Well, it would be a story that could be at least a two-hour film at this point.

Gord: And that is what I am hoping to do. Again, that is another project, a DVD of some sort. Just something put together and it will grow from that. We'll get something and just move on from there.

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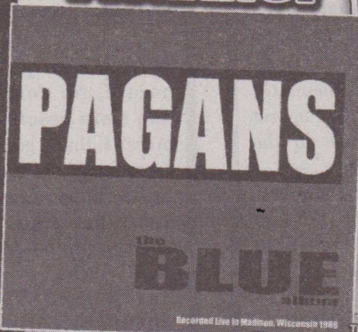

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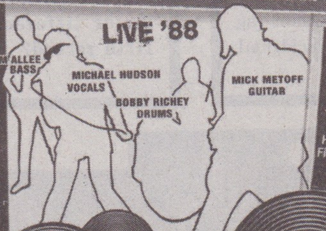

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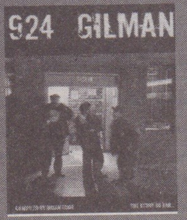

"There is a theme that runs through punk rock about fighting a revolution. Anger and aggression are just as much a part of the scene as the music is, but sometimes I wonder what we are fighting against when we just keep fighting each other. This includes the internal schism between the roles of men and women in the scene. There is this girl who used to hang around here and at almost every show someone would grab her tits. I watched her stand up for herself after getting physically torn down and rarely did anyone stand up with her. This consistent degradation denied her the right to fully contribute what she could to the community she wanted to be a part of. Hate to sound like an idealist, but I did not get involved in Gilman to get beat down or beat up. I came here because I love the music and saw the potential of what can happen with it."
-- Rachel S. '00 (excerpt from 924 Gilman book)

ANTIDOTE

Antidote started back in 1996 in a squat in the Netherlands. Twelve years later, the band has played over 400 gigs and just released their fifth record. I spoke to bassist Arne about their newest record, touring, and the punk scene in the Netherlands.
Interview by Paul Benschop (the Netherlands).

MRR: Who are the members of Antidote and what is your daily life like?
Arne: Antidote started back in 1996. All of us tried playing in several other bands before that, but none of them came any further than the rehearsal room, a few demo tapes, an incidental gig or a small tour. We all got tired of that; we wanted to make records, we wanted to tour. After some booze and drugs we accidentally ended up in a rehearsal room and with the four of us we decided to form Antidote. We used to rehearse at the Blauwe Aanslag [famous squat, now evicted, in The Hague—ed.], a place where there was always something happening. Huib used to hang out there as well. Although he said our music sucked in those days, he enjoyed sharing the stage with us when we had a gig in Germany. After a while, he always joined us at rehearsals and gigs, and not much later he became part of Antidote as well. Our line-up has always been the same: Jaeques on drums (has his own company that develops open-source software), Joris on guitar (graduating in law), Bart on vocals/guitar (project manager), Arne on vocals/bass (internet coordination at the government) and Huib on vocals (works in the harbor).

MRR: You just released your new record, *No Communication*. What are the main reactions so far?
Arne: I think good. We get good feedback from people on the sound and people seem to appreciate our Dutch songs. Most reviews I read so far were positive, although I personally don't care much about reviews.
MRR: What is your own view on the new record? If you prepare yourself on the recordings, are there any major differences between a first or a fifth record?
Arne: We are all really satisfied with the new record, both with the production and with the music. This was the first time we booked the studio for five days instead of the usual two. These extra days made the recording process much more relaxed and less hurried. We recorded this record in the same studio as our previous record (*Another Dose*) and last time we were already satisfied. This time, no matter how cliché it may sound, it felt like the technician became the sixth member of the band. A few songs weren't completely finished when we hit the studio, but we had time enough to finish these new songs. The whole atmosphere was relaxed and calm. Maybe this was because of the fact that we drank 125 liters of beer during those five days. During the fourth day in the studio we reached a point where we got stuck. When Jaeques bought some beer at the supermarket we quickly emptied three trays of beer. Together with the alcohol, the inspiration came back. For example, after the beers, it took us only a half an hour to write the song 'Koldermodel.' As for differences in preparations, the first time you enter the studio you don't know what to expect and how everything will work out. And, well, the fifth time it has become a routine.

MRR: When I compare this record to previous records I think the songs didn't really change, but when I look at the atmosphere and lyrics I think the new record is darker than the previous ones. Your job sucks, friends use drugs, etc.
Arne: Well, none of us are 20 anymore. We made our first record in 1997 and it's quite common thaat a person changes in eleven years' time. This is visible in our lyrics as well as in our music. It's not as if we don't like to drink until we drop, but how many songs can you write about drinking beer? When people grow older, the way they look at things changes. Your personal views change. Things you didn't care about ten years ago become important, and vice versa. If this means the lyrics on our latest album became "darker" compared to previous records, it might reflect that we still grow as people. But honestly, I don't think our lyrics changed that much compared to our previous records. For some reasons lots of people have always considered us to be part of those "let's get drunk" and "I don't care" punks, but on all records, all our lyrics deal with much more than that.

MRR: During a gig in Rotterdam in 2007, someone in the crowd died. Can you describe that evening? Did it surprise you to realize that things like that happen in the Netherlands?

Arne: Actually, I don't want to waste too many words on that evening. Person One smashed in the head of Person Two with a bar chair. Then Persons Three and Four also kicked Person Two which resulted in the death of Person Two. That something like this happens during a gig surprised me. On the other hand, the fact it happened in Rotterdam proves my prejudices about Rotterdam. It's just an aggressive city.

MRR: What's the impact of this evening on you as a band? Did it cross your mind to quit or did you decide to change certain things in the future?

Arne: We never considered stopping with Antidote, although we decided never to play in The Barong [a club in Rotterdam—ed.] again. We also decided never to continue playing when we notice aggressive behavior in the crowd. Ironically enough, two weeks later we played in Arnhem and there was some guy with a Nazi shirt in the crowd. You can think about it whatever you want, but if someone visits a punk gig and openly wears a Nazi shirt, that person is provoking the crowd. That means you're looking for a fight. Both Gewapend Beton [Dutch Reagan Youth—ed.] and us refused to play as long as people like that were inside. It ended up when Gewapend Beton told the organizers "he leaves or we leave."

MRR: I remember an Antidote gig from 1998. If I compare the Antidote from then to now, I think that you as band have changed a lot—from "apolitical beer punks" to a band that uses the stage of a sold-out gig to give the audience their view on the Dutch asylum policy. Compared to ten years ago, did you change as a band, as a person, or has the scene changed?

Arne: As I said, for some reason people see us as those "let's get drunk" or "I don't care" punks, but on all of our records we sing about more than just that. Maybe *My Life* (debut LP) is an exception, but on our *Go Pogo* album we already had songs such as "How Can We Live Tomorrow" and "No Nazis in Punk." The album *Back in Year Zero*, for example, included the Dutch songs "Geen Beweging" and "Rood, Wit & Blauw" and you already mentioned the songs on *Another Dose*. So, as a band, we didn't change a lot, but as persons we surely did. How sad can you be if you're still the same person as you were ten years ago? And the scene? It has surely changed. It all became much more apathetic. Some people will call it "more tolerant," but what if that means openly flirting with the right? No thanks! Like punks who dislike squats?! Sorry, but that's like the pope saying he isn't Catholic or Shane MacGowan who drinks Malt Beer. Two weeks ago I saw Seein Red live and somewhere between the songs Paul said "I'm from the generation when right wing was not done and I grew up in the punk tradition of antifascism and left wing activism." Damn, that's also a big part of punk. Just take a look at the Dutch punk history. Without people throwing molotovs in 1980, we never would have had places like Vrankrijk and Blauwe Aanslag (two famous Dutch squats). So we are very happy to use our records and gigs as a way to teach young 15-year-old punks about that part of history.

MRR: In Holland there are many bands such as Seein Red (hardcore), Beans (skapunk), and Rązorblade (oi!). Somehow you're one of the few Dutch bands that manage to attract punks, skins, and crusties. You released a split EP with the Marxist punks from Seein Red, played with The Business, and played at squatting benefit gigs. How do you manage to get along with so many different people? Is your music that good or are you such nice people?

Arne: Haha, we are very nice people indeed. Well, we are all open-minded, adopting one doesn't exclude the other. As a band as well as people we have an independent attitude. But in the end we all do the same: making music that girlfriends, colleagues, and parents don't like.

MRR: You've played at a wide variety of places. From big halls in the US to big festivals as Wasted or crusty squats. Where do you prefer playing? Big festivals or the small places?

Arne: Personally I prefer smaller places, DIY gigs. It makes me feel more comfortable than at major big halls. But don't get me wrong, it surely gives a big kick to play in a fully loaded CBGB's or at a big festival.

MRR: Antidote played several gigs in Russia. The context in Russia differs much from, for instance, the Netherlands or Germany. Do you have some nice anecdotes about playing in Russia?

Arne: Russia is a strange country. It's a complete different world that you enter. Soldiers doing security at gigs, traveling 18 hours in some rancid train, drinking with the locals in that train and ending up dancing at the bar of the train. Tours that get cancelled because of obscure threats by fascist organizations, cab drivers who stop at the middle of the road, take a jerry can, leave the car behind without saying a word, come back a half hour later with petrol and drive further, being live at a commercial SMS-program on TV where someone from Siberia wins a ticket for your gig in Moscow the next day (3,000 miles away!). Well, that's a weird experience.

MRR: Tell us about your lucrative deal with Pogoraush Beer.

Arne: Pogoraush once said they'd give us two crates of beer at every gig we played in Germany. It didn't completely work out, but whenever we play near Munchen, there's always someone who brings us two crates of Pogoraush. It's not an official sponsorship, it's more like a favor from a friend.

MRR: Do you have any closing comments?

Arne: Keep an eye on our website for our most up-to-date gig list. Keep in mind we are still not finished. As long as we have just as much fun with Antidote as we have now, we certainly won't quit!

www.antidote.nl
www.myspace.com/antidote

LA URSS

La Urss, as they would say in Spain, are "la hostia": four teenage psychopaths from Arabian-flavored Granada in the south of Spain, playing late-'70s-style punk in the Spanish tradition of Siniestro Total, Eskorbuto, and KGB, fused with American punk like the Heartbreakers and Dead Boys. These guys are probably the youngest punk band in Spain, and they manage to fucking annihilate the run-of-the-mill twenty-somethings trying their hand at this vastly mimicked genre of music.

On stage, they froth at the mouth. The skin-and-bones, shirtless, leather-pants-clad singer conjures images of a young Stiv Bators at his best. Their guitarist, with a cherry-red semi-hollowbody Gibson, throws down Chuck Berry and Johnny Thunders-esque licks like they were his own. The sneering bass player conjures images of old Spanish punk; sweat dripping down his brow, oozing attitude. The tall, gangly drummer utilizes his long arms for some spastic, Don Bolles-style Germs beats, gleefully rim-shotting and keeping on top of the hi-hat while almost falling off his drum stool.

After six months of seeing fat thirty-year-olds onstage here in Madrid, these young guns shot into town with a brash energy that was refreshing. They were sexually frustrated teenage kids making the only music they know or feel that they can play—their only way out, their only weapon, as humor and music seem like humanity's only weapon in a world that grows more violent and complicated. Punk was about kicking down the walls, or not even realizing they were there. Kids might not know shit, but sometimes they know rock and roll.

With their classic sound, these guys could've been onstage with the Spanish legends of yore, but at the same time, those bands were more influenced by British punk then American punk. In 2008, with the joys of the internet, you can get the most obscure of music to the most rural and far-reaching places. The south of Spain is known for flamenco and bullfighting, not really for punk rock, and bands rarely play there. Granada's also a university town, home to a lot of indie rock, along with hippies who live in caves in the hills and gypsies who live in shanty towns on the outskirts of the city. This is the Spain

that Hemingway and Joe Strummer loved and praised. After nearly 50 years of fascism under hard-fisted Francisco Franco, his death at the end of the '70s brought Spain out of isolation. This is when punk was happening, and a ton of bands popped up all over the country.

Over 30 years later, Spain hasn't lost its passion for music. Thanks to labels like Munster and Beat Generation reissuing old Spanish punk, younger generations have a chance to rediscover those great bands. That's the lead up to young'uns like La Urss delivering us something furious. La Urss just released their first single on Madrid's Bowery Records, and it's a scathing slab of wax. Bowery is a great little punk rock record store in Malasaña, the rock 'n' roll district of Madrid. Santi, who owns the place, is a big-time contributor to the local music scene, and he also runs a bar called Garaje Sonico in Malasaña that has great DJs and shows old punk movies behind the bar. I caught up with La Urss a little hung over on Sunday afternoon at Santi's flat in Malasaña after they put on a killer show the night before at the Wurlitzer Ballroom. Without further adieu, here's La Urss! Viva la revolución!

Introduction and interview by Justin Maurer.
Translated from Spanish to English by Justin with help from Raquel and Kika.

MRR: Hi, La Urss! Why don't you introduce yourselves?
Jorge: I'm Jorge, I play the guitar and I'm from Malaga.
Miguel: My name's Miguel, I'm from Sevilla and I play bass.
Africo: I'm Africo, I'm also from Malaga, and I'm the singer. Pablo, the drummer couldn't be here. He disappeared last night...with a girl. *[laughter]*

MRR: Who inspired you to start playing your instrument?
Jorge: Chuck Berry, Johnny Thunders, Steve Jones.

MRR: Anyone Spanish?
Jorge: Spanish? No one.
Miguel: First I played the guitar. I had four friends and they all played guitar, so I switched to bass. Why I started playing was because of Spanish bands like Eskorbuto, Larsen, CNT, KGB. I met up with these guys and started playing bass in La Urss.
Africo: I don't know why I started singing, probably because I don't know how to play any instruments. My inspirations are Larsen, Siniestro Total, Familia Real, and Sex Pistols, too, like everybody else.

MRR: Last night, people were saying you are like a young Spanish Johnny Rotten. Maybe you also have a hint of inspiration by Iggy Pop or Stiv Bators?
Africo: Stiv Bators, I like a lot the attitude he had. But I don't really like how he sang. I like singers who have a sassy kind of *niña*-to singing voice, like a small boy trying to be older. Stiv was cool, but he isn't my favorite, singer-wise.

MRR: Explain what Granada is like to someone outside of Spain.
Africo: It's a cheap city, a really beautiful city. There's a lot of culture from the south of Spain. There aren't a lot of punk bands. Everyone knows that the Arabs brought us punk rock (everyone laughs).
Miguel: Joe Strummer used to live in Granada.

MRR: It seems to be true that a lot of people outside of Spain only know about Granada from the Clash song "Spanish Bombs."
Miguel: Joe Strummer was really into Lorca [a homosexual poet from Granada who was killed by Franco's army]. And maybe because of that, he loved the south of Spain and was living a bohemian kind of lifestyle when he was in Granada.

MRR: A lot of people have a romantic idea about the south of Spain. A lot of Germans and English people like going on holiday in Spain, no?
Africo: The English go to Granada only for getting drunk and because it´s cheap. They don't give a fuck about Spanish culture. They come to Granada to play golf and to go to the beach. There's always a ton of British football hooligans getting drunk. The thing about England is that the weather and the food are terrible. So we get the English tourists pissing all over our streets. Go home!

MRR: Do you run into any problems with tourists or football hooligans?
All: No, no.
Miguel: The problems that we have, most of the time, are with people from Granada.

MRR: What were the first bands that you discovered that you saw live, or bought records by?
Africo: First record I bought? Maybe it was Sex Pistols or Dead Kennedys.

MRR: How old are you guys, anyway?
Africo: 22.
Jorge: Me, too.
Miguel: I'm 20, and Pablo, the drummer is 20 also.

MRR: What was your first show, then?
Miguel: The first time I really flipped out about music was when I saw that Sex Pistols movie *The Great Rock and Roll Swindle*. I started listening to music when I was really young. When we started La Urss, we were like fourteen, fifteen years old.

MRR: Wow, so that's almost ten years playing music for you guys, then? The average age of the crowd in Madrid last night was about 30 years old. What do you think about that?
Africo: We're the youngest band in Spain.
Miguel: For the last five years I was playing with another band called the Webelos, starting when I was fifteen.

MRR: What do your parents think about your music and your clothes? Are they more conservative or are they accepting of you guys?
Jorge: I think they have a false idea that we're successful.
Africo: My mom, she's worried about my sexual orientation because of the clothes I wear sometimes. She's getting kind of nervous. *[laughter]* My grandmother, since we're in Madrid playing music, thinks that we are famous and earning money. *[more laughter]* If we ever went on tour in the US, I think that our parents would freak out. It's really not normal for young guys like us in Spain to live on our own, in an apartment, not with our parents, much less tour in Germany or the US.

MRR: Why play punk in 2008?
Miguel: In reality, we don't have any idea how to play. We listen to music that we like, and there's a lot of music we hate: Spanish pop with typical lyrics like "my girlfriend, blah, blah, blah, don't leave me, blah, blah, blah." I think we're pretty open, I mean, for music played by four young people. I don't know, we just play music that we like. Also because we live in Spain and we're different from most people our age, maybe we have something more in common with people living in other countries then in Spain. Here people are more ridiculous, or more political, defined by the left or right, and everyone seems to think the same.
Africo: A big difference is that in Germany, they know how to speak English, in Belgium, and other countries, too. Here, people don't really know English, so the

reality is that Spanish punk is many times a direct copy of English or American punk. There are a lot of better bands in other European countries, but the best punk is American or British. I mean, there were great Spanish punk bands, and I'm not trying to ignore that there have been a lot of great bands in our history here, but it's really hard to sing in Spanish and have anybody outside of Spain pay attention to your band. And when bands try and sing in English, it doesn't really work. It sounds cheesy.

Miguel: Recordings of all the punk bands in England were much better then the bands here. There were so many great Spanish punk bands like Eskorbuto, La Banda Trapera del Rio, but very few had a good recording, really.

MRR: What are the most important Spanish punk records in your opinion?

Miguel: Eskorbuto, from the Basque Country, made the best Spanish punk records, probably, because they showed that you don't need to play fast, you don't need to play hardcore, and it was all about the attitude. And they lived in pretty dark times. So here, in reality, Eskorbuto were probably the most important band. The way he sang was punk, and their style of music, and their attitude inspired a lot of people.

MRR: What are the five most important records for you guys then?

Africo: Eskorbuto and Siniestro Total.

MRR: TDK?

Africo: TDK were a total rip-off of the Dead Kennedys. The best groups in the beginning were Eskorbuto, Siniestro Total, Espasmodicos , Larsen.

Miguel: Best records for me are from the bands from the north, the Basque Country. Eskorbuto. In Barcelona, there was Ultimo Resorte, other bands, Desechables, then Larsen, and later stuff like KGB.

Africo: There were also Paralisis Permanente, who were kinda like Siouxie or Bauhaus.

MRR: It seems like a lot of your lyrics are about war, is that an important topic for you guys?

Africo: In La Urss, we sing about stuff like the cold war. We also have a song called "Europa" which is a song about the film by Lars Von Trier. This movie, for us, had a lot of feeling about the worst parts of Europe. That kind of sentiment.

Miguel: On the single, we have a song about the potency and the aftermath of the Second World War on Europe. Lyrics that are about industry and war, but that's not the only thing we sing about. We like lyrics with a sense of humor; we have a song on the single that is pretty hilarious, lyric-wise.

Africo: I mean, in punk rock, the best lyrics are not about hating the government or "I hate the fucking police." I mean, lyrics shouldn't be about the same tired old thing.

Miguel: The best lyrics are like the Dead Kennedys' "Kill the poor"; the song isn't as obvious like saying "Kill the rich," it's "Kill the poor"! *[laughter]* That makes you think a little more, and there's a sense of humor there too.

MRR: MRR, being from San Francisco, often has some political stuff in its contents, so here's the obligatory politics question. What political opinions do you guys have, personally or individually?

Africo: The politicians are the same as thieves; they don't have much to do in Spain besides that; I mean, politics can still be relatively corrupt here in Spain.

MRR: Granada has a few universities, and has more of a leftist feeling from young people. Don't you think the left is more fashionable for young people?

Africo: Young people only care about smoking joints, and they don't really vote. There's a lot of everything in Granada, and I mean the conservative party won here. People voted for PP [Partido Popular, the right wing political party in Spain]. So I don't think it's so left-wing. But yeah, the young people don't care; they just smoke hash and go to the beach.

MRR: *[laughs]*

Africo: We don't really care about what people think. I mean, here in Spain, you have forty million people thinking alike. And you have the hippies and people with flutes and dogs.

MRR: A lot of them live in caves, yeah?

Africo: *[laughs]* Yeah, they actually do, these hippies with their flutes and their dogs, and lots of gypsies as well, whole encampments of them. And then in the summers, all of the British and Germans. *[laughs]*

MRR: Sexual frustration seems to be a major theme with you guys...if not in your lyrics, then onstage for sure. Do you guys have problems trying to find girls that you get along with or think alike?

Africo: Always.

Jorge: *[sarcastically]* For me, I go through girls like...

Africo: Cute girls always have boyfriends.

Miguel: Girls like guys who are not like us.

MRR: What bugs you most about Granada or about Spain?
Miguel: Old people.
Africo: What bothers me most is the old men in the bars eating ham, drinking, and smoking cigars while watching bullfighting on TV. Or the kind of attitude where people don't think for themselves like, "My village is red, so I'm red." People from both the left wing and right wing bother me.
Miguel: In Ireland, for example, there are things to do. Bars have live music every night. It doesn't happen here too often.
Africo: In a lot of ways, Spain is 20 years behind the rest of the world. Maybe in Morocco they are 20 years behind us. Spain is really sad because it's far behind the rest of Europe, we only have Portugal to make fun of. *[laughter]* We're behind France, Germany, I mean they're rich compared to us.
Miguel: Where I'm from, in Sevilla, it's total white trash everywhere. Granada is great, but in Sevilla there is absolutely nothing to do...you can't do anything there.
Africo: In Malaga, there's like two thousand golf courses, sports stadiums, there's nothing else.
Miguel: In Sevilla, during Semana Santa [sacred week], there are fucking massive religious processions every two minutes, and all of these traffic jams because people are flipping out at the processions, crawling on their knees, carrying crosses, weeping at the Virgin Mary statues. I mean, it's intense. And the streets are always full of these people.

MRR: What about the food? Why do people say the food in the south is the best in Spain?
Africo: Well, typically in a traditional Catholic family, the women are inside with the kids all day, and so they are inside cooking all day. So of course their cooking techniques are not like the women in England who are playing billiards in the pubs all day, and they cook with butter instead of olive oil! *[laughter]* I mean, in the US, too, you guys must eat horribly!

MRR: You might be able to taste some food in the US if you come on tour. Do you have any plans for touring Europe or abroad?
Miguel: We might be able to go play in London soon, with a friend of Santi's there organizing it. The bands from Spain don't have a lot of motivation for touring outside of Spain. It's really hard for the bands here, singing in Spanish, to tour abroad. And we can't sing in English. Instead of "come on" we say "kamon." *[laughter]*

MRR: There seems to be a few bands from Barcelona touring Europe and the US.
Miguel: But they are more kinda hardcore-type bands. I dunno. I hope we can come to the US someday.

MRR: OK, the last sentence for your public and for the world?
Africo: Thanks for having us in your fanzine; this is best moment in my life. Thank you, *Maximum Rocknroll*. Now I have the happiness to keep going.

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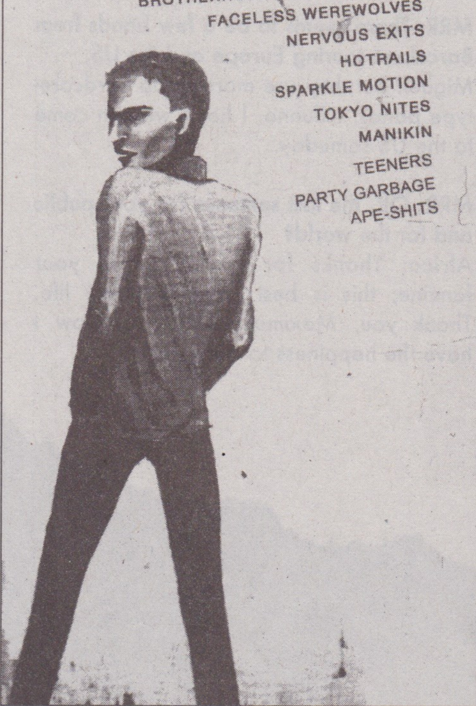

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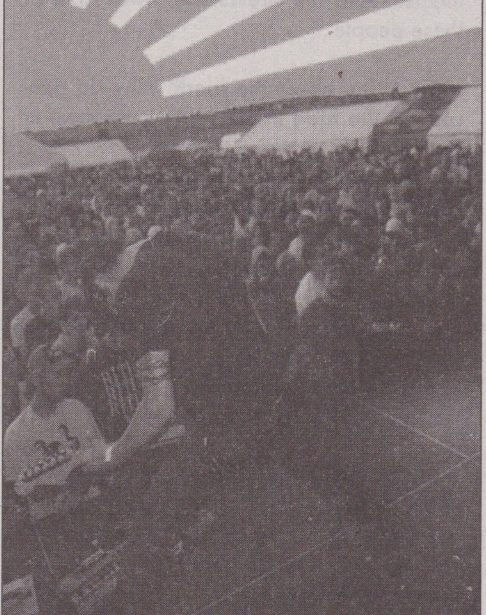

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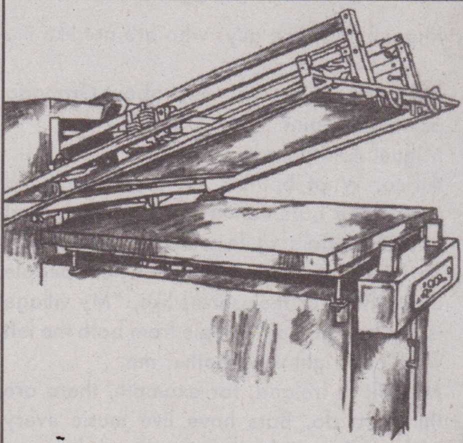

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CANADIAN RIFLE

Canadian Rifle has been kicking it out in the Chicago punk scene for several years and has demonstrated some of the best songwriting and live performances during that time. Their discography thus far includes two 7" EPs (on Squirrel Heart and Criminal IQ, respectively), and they are releasing a split 7" with American Cheeseburger this summer. A West Coast tour with German hardcore band Solid Decline is in the works for July and August. Following this tour, Canadian Rifle will record their first full-length LP (a split label release between Residue and Squirrel Heart). This interview was conducted at two different locations. The first attempt was interrupted by excessive drinking and drug-induced banter by other bands' members at a local show, thus prompting a more successful second attempt a week later at Canadian Rifle's practice space in Rogers Park.
Interview by Jordan Atkins.
Photos by Craig Kamrath

MRR: So you guys have existed twice… I mean, you started and then stopped and then started again years later with a different line-up?
Nick: I wasn't around… We followed Jake.
Jake: Well, we originally formed around 2000 or 2001 and we had a short-lived existence. Played five or six shows total and then stopped because people moved and I was doing another band called Fourth Rotor. Our drummer Micah quit to play in another band as well. We all found ways to satisfy ourselves-musically speaking-in other bands. Canadian Rifle just altogether stopped.

MRR: How many years passed between the first and second Canadian Rifle?
Jake: Like maybe six years later.

MRR: It took you six years?
Jake: Bryan and I decided to start it again. And Bryan's wife Sarah played our demo to Nick. And then Tim was added and it just blossomed from there.

MRR: Why did you keep the same name when you are playing all new songs?
Nick: I assumed that I was going to learn all the songs and that the band was, essentially, going to be the same. But I think there is only one song we play from back then, "In a Land of Flakes Nothing Sticks."
Jake: I guess the first part was short-lived. We liked the name, and essentially it's the same thing. Very few people even remember us from back then. It just worked out that way.

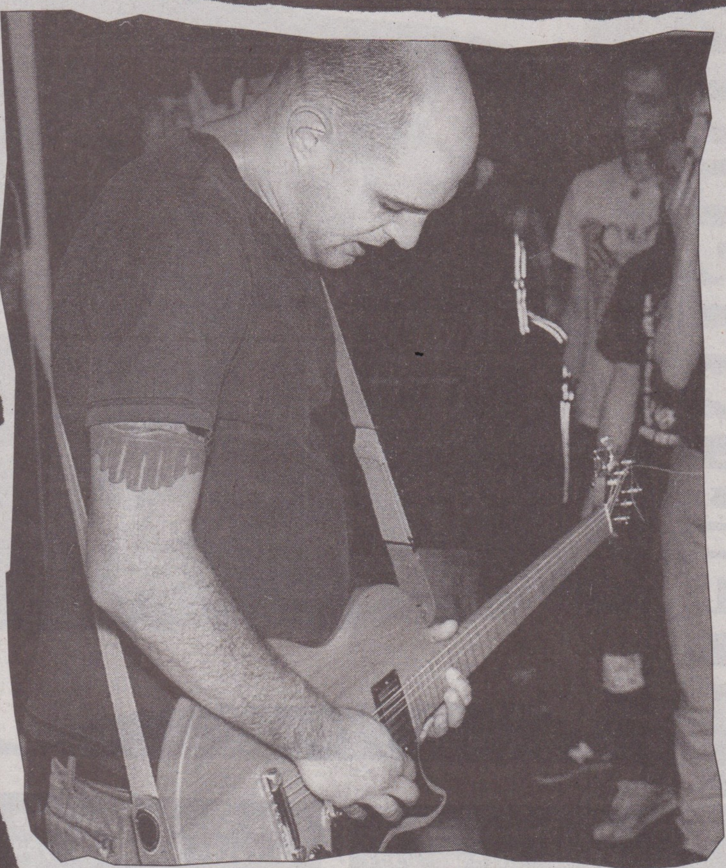
MRR: And then you had even more membership changes?
Jake: Yeah, Bryan was getting busy with Chronic Seizure and it was too hard for him to be in two functioning bands. Then we got Al to play guitar, but now it is down to us three.

MRR: Is this upheaval of members frustrating?
Tim: Yeah, it really is. You get used to playing songs and being together, and then someone quits and you have to learn all over to play with

someone else. And then that changes too, then it takes shit twice as long. You hate old songs because they take too long too teach or you aren't into them anymore, so it forces the band to write new songs and makes us tighter, which I guess is the silver lining…but it sucks too.
Nick: There are songs that have been re-written three times. It makes you wacky.

MRR: Why do have so much trouble with second guitar players? Why did Al quit?
Jake: It's Nick fault. No, I don't know…. People go their own ways, make their own paths. We are happy to be a three-piece. Really, the more people, the more neurotic it gets. A band is like a serious and fucked-up relationship and you don't know what you get with people sometimes. We had shows booked in Canada and right when we were about to leave, Al tells us that he's not going. We felt fucked at the time, but we knew the shows were solid and went out as a three-piece instead. We really didn't know what we were getting into and just went out and it was really good. I like it this way. It came together and makes sense now. Though, we have no hard feelings for Al; that is just the way it came out.

MRR: Canadian Rifle is getting pretty popular in and around Chicago and it seems that you have a sound that allows you to play to different crowds-garage rock, pop punk, and even hardcore. Why do you think you guys appeal to many different crowds?
Jake: I think we're a straightforward punk band, and we are into lots of different music that fits into a bunch of different scenes. I mean, we will play about anywhere, which lets different types of people see us. Though we definitely feel the most comfortable in the basement or garage or fucked-up art space. Any DIY space is going to be a better punk show than a bar or club. That's what the punk element is to me, and where we connect with the most people.



Tim: Definitely.
Jake: It's where real shit happens. Any place that has live music has the possibility to be good. But the basement is where our best shows are, where people are right there with you and there's no hiding at the bar.

MRR: What are your best experiences touring and playing shows? You played that No Idea Fest-how was that for a show?
Nick: I thought it was all right. I really liked playing Winnipeg. That was fun.
Jake: Winnipeg was real good. Minneapolis is always fun. The New York show was really good, too… The best part of touring is sometimes more than just the shows, especially when you're making connections with people. People are helping other folks out and getting to know them after a couple of hours in different towns; coming in and out of different worlds and people's lives.
Nick: I loved that house show in Chattanooga. There was a lot of confusion because we accidentally contacted two different houses that are really close to each other about playing on the same night.

MRR: Over-booking yourselves in Chattanooga, Tennessee?
Nick: Turned out to be one of my favorite shows.
Tim: That is the only place I've been to where the show space is cleaner than the actual house where people live. A true and nasty punk house…
Jake: Yeah, they wouldn't let us leave the house. This guy was actually physically blocking us from leaving and

we doing our best to get the fuck out. He even chased after us even when we were in the car. We needed to drive that night and he wasn't having it.

MRR: Who is this guy?
Jake: This guy Tom Foot that lives at that house Antarctica. Great guy, kinda nuts… Chattanooga is definitely a hidden treasure of touring. Not a lot of bands would think of playing there, but it turns out great every time.

MRR: Was it better than the No Idea fest?
Nick: In a lot of ways it was better. But the No Idea Fest is something that obviously took a lot of organization to put together. Really set up for what it was. It is overkill in a way. It's like a novelty or music vacation and not really a show. I mean, I had fun, but it felt like hundreds of bands. One show after another…
Jake: It was a good tour down and back, but when I look back at the actual fest, I wouldn't say it was a highlight for us. I mean, you play in front of so many people, which is cool and we played well, but it all feels a little empty when there are a million bands playing.

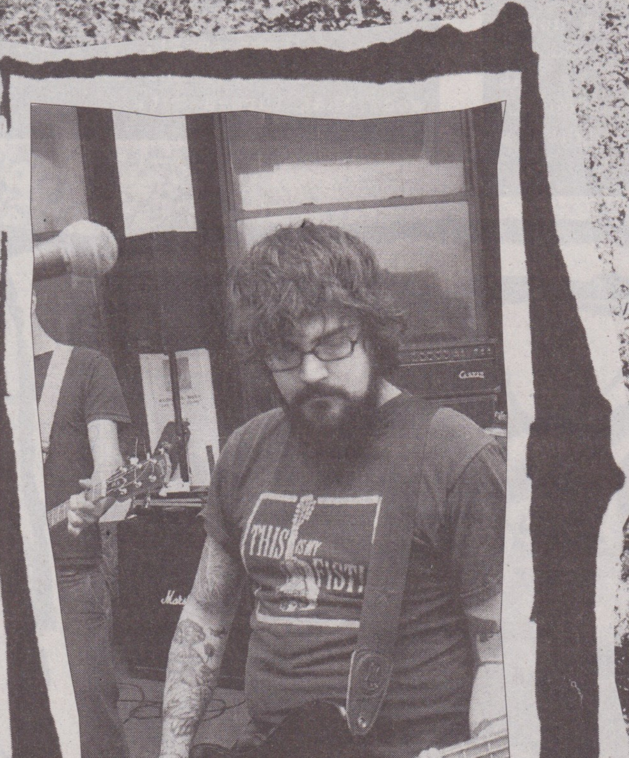
MRR: I've noticed that a lot of your lyrics aren't following the standard topics—you have a song about not breeding, another about mental health, and one about gentrification—but none of them seem to feel political. What makes you want to write punk songs about these topics?
Jake: God made me write it. Thanks to the old guy in the sky. Kidding aside, these are things I witness or see. The song "Cinder Block" came to me while I was on a painting job and seeing how these rich condos were built like shit. These neighborhoods were really fucked up and crime-ridden, and these condos are being built right there in front of it all. Obviously they were built for the neighborhood to change, and for a bunch of people who are clueless and probably never lived in the city. These condos were so poorly built right where project buildings once were and with the cheapest materials possible, and being sold for $400,000 or $500,000. It's a trick that is going on to make these things appear to be amazing buildings right next to downtown, but the reality is that the neighborhood is still boiling around these shitty condos. These people have no idea that they are hated and that it is all a sham. Essentially that is where that song came from. I feel that I write about things that are negative in my view but that most people feel are meant to move the world further along. I once had a guy get upset about the song "Multiply" at an out-of-town gig.

MRR: Someone confronted you on a song during a set?
Jake: Well this guy got upset when we played it, and he tried to explain how he was proud to be a "punk parent"…
Nick: The baby bought a record.
Jake: I missed that, but I guess the baby bought a record… Anyway, he comes up after the show and goes into how he is more punk now than before when he hadn't had the kid. I'm having a hard time getting through to the guy that it's a punk song. I have friends with kids and friends that are having kids and I don't think less of anyone for breeding. It's not meant to be preachy at all, but is my view on something I think about. And it's a fucking punk song. Nothing more.

MRR: Did you convince him to get a vasectomy?
Jake: Yeah, I grabbed some shears and cut his balls off. Does that prove my point?!? But, I mean, it was getting a little silly. It's essentially about over-population, lack of resources, and parents wanting to live vicariously through their children. It's fine that guy got bummed, but I couldn't talk to him anymore…
Nick: There was just a fundamental disagreement. I mean, my mom had kids and look how good that turned out.

MRR: Why the "No Dreams/No Goals" as your logo? And the deer with the gas mask on?
Jake: That goes with what we are talking about. It's negative, bleak, and a little funny too.
Tim: More people are into "No Goals" as a statement than "No Dreams," from what I've seen. Losing goals isn't as hard for people as losing their dreams. It hits a little at the core. I like the irony of the deer with the gas mask. Simple statement , but that is what it feels like we are heading towards. I've been asked if we are serious at times by people that think we are playing on being negative.
Jake: That's our humor; it's the way the world looks to us. If you are going to get bummed out on a "No Dreams" button, than don't go to a punk show, because it's not going to be your ballgame.

MRR: Do you notice any big difference between other punk/hardcore cities and Chicago?
Nick: I always hear people tell me that Chicago is an "underdog city" or whatever. And I don't think about it that way. I can't pinpoint a sound or even think about Chicago being better or worse than any place else, but there are a lot of good bands here.
Tim: I feel that people on the opposite coasts sometimes don't take bands from the Midwest as seriously, or maybe that they are into their own scenes more than anyone else's, but the Midwest bands never seem to make as much noise or get as much praise as bands from the Coasts get.
Nick: Really? I've never felt or gotten that impression from anyone when we played out of town. I can honestly say I've never seen examples of that. I can't deny that people feel that way, but I'm not aware of the mentality, I guess.
Tim: I'm speaking in generalizations, but I think there's something there. I mean, don't get me wrong, people from all over help you out with shows and we do the same for people from out of town, too. I just think that there sometimes is a mindset dealing with bands from this city, or they don't entirely get noticed the same way.
Jake: I think the scene in Chicago is really, really good. I've done my share of touring over the years and I've even gone out of this country a few different times, and the best part about being a band from Chicago is that you are in a large city with a lot of different kinds of bands and ideas. Maybe Chicago doesn't get as much notice nationally or maybe it does. Who cares? I mean, we would still play what we want anyway. The same thing could be said for a band in the middle of Arizona or Canada or something. Most Chicago bands find places to play, so we are doing pretty good. There are tons of shows here on the weekends and during the week. I feel lucky that our scene is good and hope other scenes everywhere are going to keep this thing rolling. Personally, I like getting to a show and not knowing what is going to happen and who you're going to meet... and you never know what fucked-up situation will pop up and you are constantly stuck in the mystery day to day. That's what makes your tour happen, and not so much the other stuff like being from a certain city or whatever.
Nick: Remember we have no dreams.



MRR: Why did Canadian Rifle release a live tape of you guys playing in Elgin, Illinois?
Nick: Because this guy recorded it. Honestly, it was done and we thought it was funny.
Tim: If it had been good, we wouldn't have wanted to release it. It was a train-wreck of a set of being wasted in nowhere and playing to that...
Jake: I was kinda against releasing it at first, because we were...or I was really drunk and the banter in-between songs was not the best, but then these guys made tapes and brought them to sell at our next show.
Nick: We got your permission...
Jake: I didn't know you were serious... I mean, you guys did your research and made it happen. I didn't know what was going on.

MRR: It seems like this band runs on doing things backwards like sending a blank demo tape to get reviewed by *MRR* to accidentally reversing lyric sheets and center labels to releasing live tapes of your sloppiest live shows… Why?

Jake: I don't know… It just seems to work out that way. I mean, the blank tape got a good review. It said, "hey guys, want to send the music next time?" or something like that. That's a good review as far as I'm concerned. Hell, we made several Top Tens! Man, I don't know why or how this shit happens… You aim and miss and then aim again. Our insert on the second EP is backwards. On the first EP, a bunch of the colored vinyl was warped and got returned by some people. Sometimes we forget plastic bags or lyric sheets for the records we sell at shows. We're a mess; I guess it all seems to work in the end.

MRR: What was this house demolition show that Canadian Rifle played somewhere outside of Chicago where people were tearing a house down during the actual show?

Jake: It was some real psycho shit.

Nick: The flier said to bring a baseball bat and to make sure nothing is standing by the end of the night, and 200 people showed up to smash this house up. Carloads of people hell-bent on fucking this place up.

Jake: It was on three acres of land and some kids were punching out windows and walls and fucking up their hands. Everyone was in a crazed state of mind. We ended up playing around 4 a.m. A soundtrack to the destruction.

Tim: People never let up-all night. The house was condemned and was going to be torn down, only this show happened before any demolition crew came. Cops came during the band after us, and it was 6 a.m. and they were confused and really didn't know what to make of it with this house and hundreds of kids smashing it. They shut the show down, but they looked at it like it was a *Mad Max* movie or something.

MRR: What can we look for in the future for Canadian Rifle?

Tim: LP out on Residue Records and Squirrel Heart Records. West Coast tour with Solid Decline from Germany…

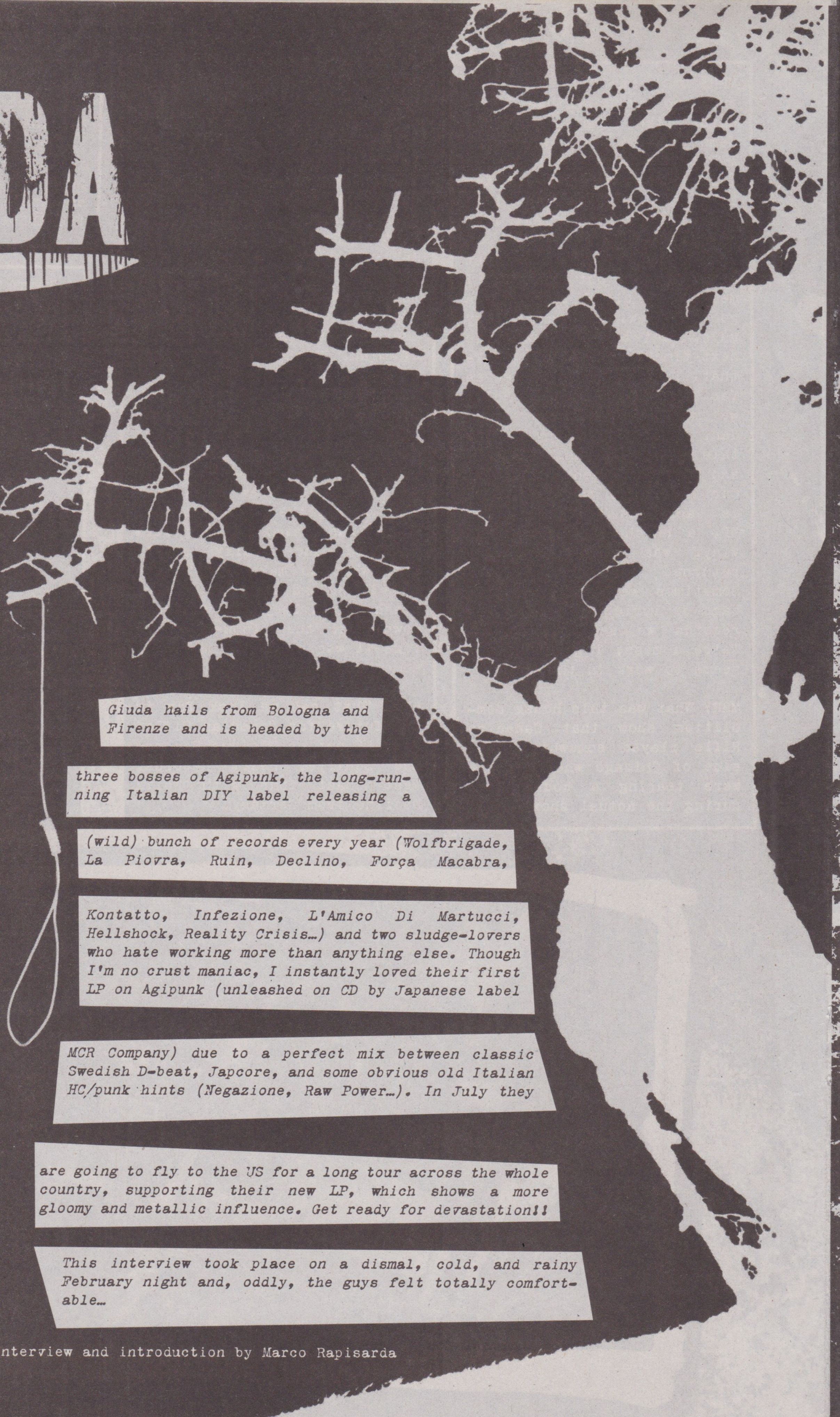
Jake: Look for records dealing with accidental shootings on hunting ranges, to deer trampling people, to insane rollercoaster accidents with people being beheaded during amusement park rides during the 1930s and '40s-the usual.

Summer 2008 Canadian Rifle / Solid Decline US Tour Dates:

July
Sat. 19-Chicago, IL
Sun. 20-St Louis, MO
Mon. 21-Lawrence, KS
Tue. 22-Ft. Worth, TX
Wed. 23-Austin, TX
Thu. 24-Las Cruces, NM
Fri. 25-Tucson, AZ
Sat. 26-San Diego, CA
Sun. 27-SoCal
Mon. 28-Bakersfield, CA
Tue. 29-San Jose, CA
Wed. 30-Oakland, CA
Thu. 31-San Francisco, CA

August
Fri. 1-Grant's Pass, OR
Sat. 2-Portland, OR
Sun. 3-Seattle, WA
Mon. 4-Seattle, WA
Tue. 5-Bozeman, MT
Wed. 6-Fargo, ND
Thu. 7-Minneapolis, MN
Fri. 8-Appleton, WI
Sat. 9-Chicago, IL

GIUDA



Giuda hails from Bologna and Firenze and is headed by the three bosses of Agipunk, the long-running Italian DIY label releasing a (wild) bunch of records every year (Wolfbrigade, La Piovra, Ruin, Declino, Força Macabra, Kontatto, Infezione, L'Amico Di Martucci, Hellshock, Reality Crisis…) and two sludge-lovers who hate working more than anything else. Though I'm no crust maniac, I instantly loved their first LP on Agipunk (unleashed on CD by Japanese label MCR Company) due to a perfect mix between classic Swedish D-beat, Japcore, and some obvious old Italian HC/punk hints (Negazione, Raw Power…). In July they are going to fly to the US for a long tour across the whole country, supporting their new LP, which shows a more gloomy and metallic influence. Get ready for devastation!!

This interview took place on a dismal, cold, and rainy February night and, oddly, the guys felt totally comfortable…

Interview and introduction by Marco Rapisarda

MRR: Hi guys, here we are! Who is Giuda?

Borys: We are the oldest young band in Italy. In a scene going underage, like here in Italy, nowadays being over 30 is pretty uncommon. Besides being old farts, we are Mila, Koppa, Matteo, Gabriele and Borys. We've all been active since the '90s and we are still here 'cause normal life is too boring for us…

Koppa: A bunch of stinky poseurs, except for me, of course!

Mila: We are ready to export spaghetti and pizza again.

MRR: How did Giuda start? How long have you been playing together?

Borys: The band started in the Fall of 2005. I wanted a new band after the demise of Disprezzo, Groebelar, and Unsung, and Mila had been too far away from the stages after DDI split up. Those who don't play maybe cannot understand it, but for me having a band and playing live was a kind of physical urgency. I couldn't live without it. So we recruited all the survivors from the aforementioned bands—Gabriele, Matteo and Margherita (later replaced by Koppa)—and we started rehearsing. In February 2006, our first gig (with Raw Power) took place. After that, a good number of concerts, a record, money, fame, groupies…

Mila: We are Italians and we are always travelling with the cliché idea that everyone has about Italians and sometimes people are really scared by us. Kind of strange that this happens even in the punk scene, but that's how it is, and a joke like that about groupies can be reason for discussion only because we are from Italy. If the same joke came from a non-Italian band, it would only be a joke. It's a kind of prejudice that sometimes is funny and sometimes not at all.

MRR: You sing in Italian and not English, why?

Mila: My English is terrible and I like the sound of the Italian language; it's more aggressive and peculiar, and like Finnish or Japanese bands, you can guess where the band is from immediately. It just comes natural to me—if I scream, I scream in Italian. And trust me, in Italy everyone is always screaming something. We are loud…sometimes way too much.

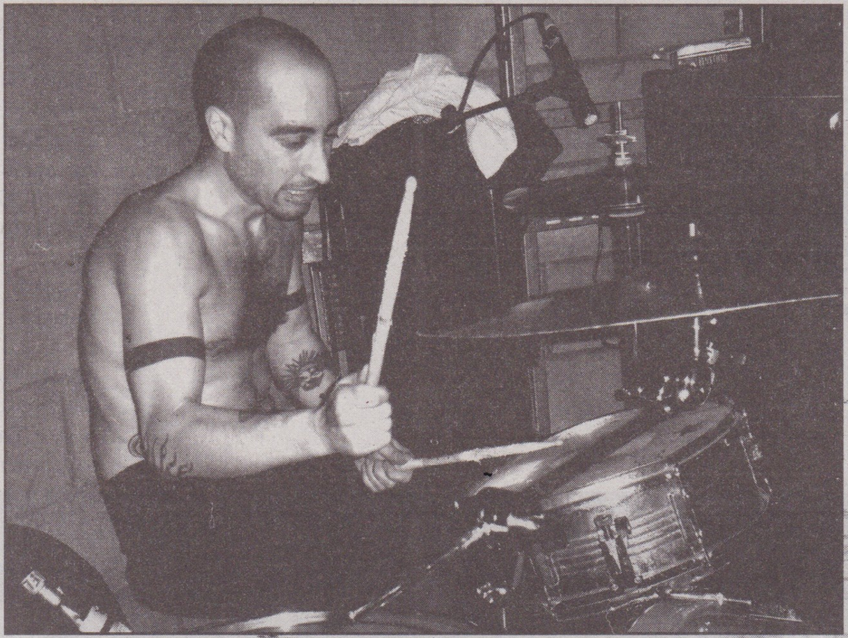
MRR: Your 12" is very fast, ha ha… I heard that you're taking a kind of doom/sludge direction—is that true? What are the bands that have influenced you?

Borys: Not that easy to say, since we all have different musical taste, and I'm pretty sure we wouldn't be able to find a band we all like (nor a band we all dislike, probably). Personally, I constantly listen to music; at home, at work, while driving, cooking, or riding my bicycle, and consciously or not, I think I'm influenced by all the different stuff I usually listen to. But, OK, I learned to play guitar from Metallica's *Kill 'Em All*, so I have to admit that metal plays a very important role. Our first album was kind of a cross between Japcore (I love Death Side riffing), classic crust (the Scandi way as well as the UK way), and old-school Italian hardcore (Negazione, Disper-azione…), but I also wanted to reach the impact of Bathory's very first records. The new songs are

much more varied; there's a wider range of influences working. So we often slow down our pace but we never forget to indulge in speed, and you can listen to a lot of mid-tempo breaks as well. I'm a big fan of funeral doom stuff, bands like Thergothon, Skepticism, Mournful Congregation, this one could be an influence. Also the mid-to-late-'80s UK metal/punk crossover is a big influence; I've been in love with bands like Bolt Thrower, Prophecy of Doom, or Axegrinder long before the stench-core hype. And also raw death and black metal bands like Asphyx, Baphomet, or Dark Throne, some old raw thrash like Sodom and Slaughter. And so, going backwards, Amebix and Hellhammer/Celtic Frost are naturally another big influence, not only on us, but on a very big part of the extreme scene. And consequently, I'd go even more backwards, as long as there's a kind of new wave mood (not sound!), think of Killing Joke or Virgin Prunes. Amebix were totally influenced by Killing Joke... OK, mix everything with classic crust like Doom, Hiatus, early Disfear, Anti-Cimex, add to this mess a spoon of Godflesh (!), the shit you get is filthy Giuda. In my humble opinion…

Koppa: I'm the last one who joined the band, so I don't really feel like the one who's in charge of writing songs and so forth. I also play in two other bands and have a project band in London, so I can't write riffs for Giuda too... So, I' m still able to look at Giuda as a watcher, and what I can hear is an original fast hardcore/crusty band with a lot metal influences. The sludge direction thing is what I would call bullshit... We just have a nice slow song that is always welcome in fast bands in order not to annoy the speed-freaks too much, heh heh.

Mila: We are trying to be heavy, that's all; fast or slow is not the problem as long as the sound and the riffs are driving…



MRR: Which is your favorite kind of venue for live concerts?

Borys: Generally, I like playing in front of 50,000 people supporting Ozzy Osbourne. This is not always possible, so I prefer small, crowded venues where people enjoy themselves and where organizers actually care about bands. It sounds like the description of Atlantide here in Bologna. Once I would have answered, "just squats!" The difference between legal and non-legal venues is still an issue in Italy, but not like some years ago. It may sound like a strange issue abroad, but Italy has a long squatting tradition rooted in the late '60s. Punk has always been linked to the squatting movement: on one side, illegal squats with low prices and a "counter-cultural" political attitude; on the other side, clubs with high prices, a for-profit attitude, and all the taxes you have to pay if you want to set up concerts legally (in Italy even turning up the radio in a public place is illegal if you don't pay taxes). But over the years punk has changed; squats have changed and clubs have changed, many punks are not afraid of attending concerts in expensive clubs, and many "normal" people go to big squats that have become legal in the meantime. Also, playing abroad, I've seen a lot of different situations—the world is not only black and white, unfortunately, and I've seen clubs that are more concerned with DIY than many squats. So, ultimately, for me, DIY is still the most important thing, and that's the attitude I wanna meet when playing around.

Koppa: I totally agree with Borys. I like to play in small places (squats, youth centres, legalized social centres, self-managed clubs, etc.), but the difference is made up by the audience! We can have crazy audiences here in Italy, which is really fine with us. I like the Czech Republic, Holland, and Belgium a lot. Germany is always a nice country to play in, since bands get all the comforts (and a shitload of free beers!!), but the audience is always a bit cold in their approach to bands like Giuda (and probably crust in general, since maybe they've had enough of it).

MRR: What about the Italian scene in 2008? Any improvements? Things got worse? Bands to keep an eye on?

Borys: Lots of people are really into the golden years of Italian hardcore, the '80s, everybody knows Wretched, CCM, Eu's Arse, Raw Power, Negazione… but there's a lot more going on. Generally speaking, right now we are knee-deep in the MySpace generation. When I was 16, the only way to get music cheap was tape-trading; I was in touch with people through letters which used to take weeks to be delivered sometimes, I used to get informed by fanzines and flyers. I still remember the first concerts I attended, I didn't have a fucking clue about what was cool or not, and I used to dress like a total nerd (woollen jumpers and white socks are nerdy, aren't they?!). Nowadays, I see 15-year-old kids dressed like punk veterans, with all the right patches in the right place and totally informed and updated about what has been going on over the last 30 years. It's the power of internet—it's easy and cheap to communicate and download all the music you like. Anyway, I have to say that it's nice to always have a bunch of enthusiastic kids at concerts; that's why we always get a lot of support and feedback and we can bring a lot of bands to play here. You can understand why we heard the guys in Avskum or Wolfbrigade say they had some of their best shows ever here in Italy. On the other hand, it looks like punk is more a product to consume, as fast as possible, and like every other product, people are more into just the music or "look" rather than the contents. Kids are very supportive, but I feel a gap between those who organize concerts, release records, play in bands, and so forth, and the "audience." Ten years ago, all the people I knew in the punk scene were active in some way, be it a distro, a zine, a band, or whatever. The final result is that people come and go, as it has always been (at least in Italy), but faster

and faster. It looks a bit crazy to me with all those 16-year-old kids around, but cool indeed. Also, we had to cope with the bad reputation Italy had abroad about being unprofessional and lazy. You know, we have always been extreme here; years ago, being professional meant being a sell-out and only in it for the business. Nowadays, there is less concern about political punk issues like DIY, activism, etc., but this has also led to a more relaxed climate, so it's easier doing things in the "proper" way without being put on trial by the DIY inquisition. So there's the good and the bad. I don't wanna say that there's no longer a connection between political activism and punk, but on one side, the "DIY inquisition" lost a lot of power and more people are more into music itself, while on the other side, I know a lot of activists who simply left the punk scene, so the link between punk and politics got weaker. Many people realized that screaming into a mic doesn't equal being politically active. Punk is political and that's the way it should be, but political issues go beyond punk. Besides that, our scene is getting better and better. I recommend venues like Atlantide in Bologna, Al Confino in Cesena, Bencivenga and Pirateria in Rome, Scintilla in Modena, Next-Emerson in Firenze, and more. It would sound like self-promotion recommending other bands we play in (though they kick ass…), so, besides Campus Sterminii, Kontatto, Disarm, and La Cuenta, I suggest checking out Dirty Power Game, BanxThis!, Pioggia Nera, La Piovra, Nagasaki Nightmare, Ed, Comrades, Contrasto, Smart Cops, Death Before Work, Post Fata Resurgo, Jilted, Turn Back Time…and some more that I can't think of right now (I'm old, you know…).

Koppa: Two days, ago we hosted Mob 47 for their two gigs in Italy. I was expecting to see at least all the "Mob 47/Anti-Cimex-patch-on-my-trousers-'n'-jackets generation," but, actually, I realized that at least ten of those people were missing... OK, the two gigs were awesome and packed with people even coming from abroad (Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia), but how is it possible to read MySpace comments such as "yes, I might come to see Mob 47" or "I don't know yet, my girlfriend wants to go to the movies, so if I'm tired I'll stay with her" when the songs on their profile are "Karnvapen Attack" or "Stop the Slaughter"?? I mean, there might never be another chance to see Mob 47 in Italy!! All this is just to say that we're having a lot of fun and audience now, but I don't think it's that reliable. I've seen people entering the gates of punk and turning from spikey street punk to dirty, dreadlocked crusty punk and then to black-dressed, long-haired metalheads in six months!! All this is happening thanks to MySpace and the massive use of technology. As Borys says, now it's so fucking easy to get the Terveet Kadet discography, for example, with just a click... When I started listening to punk, it took me three years to get an Amebix tape. Bands to keep an eye on are definitely Campus Sterminii and Kontatto (because I play in both...), La Cuenta, and Disarm ('cause the rest of Giuda plays in them...) and, of course, Dirty Power Game, Post Fata Resurgo, Pioggia Nera, Drunkards, Jilted, Ban This, Ed, Nagasaki Nightmare, Comrades, Contrasto, La Piovra (RIP), Disforia, 1/4 Morto. And there are a bunch of new bands that hopefully will make something good if they invest the right dose of energy. These bands are Çoprofagia, Bleeding, Cancer Spreading, Constitutional Hell, Cruel Storm, Disturbo. I'm probably missing some...

MRR: What are your activities when not playing in Giuda? Do you have any other projects?

Borys: I'd dare to say I have two full-time jobs. I'm a kindergarten teacher and, besides that, the rest of the time is dedicated to Agipunk: the label, distro, and booking require a lot of energy and time. I also play in Disarm, a powerviolence/grind/metal band that has been going since 1996. I'm also part of the Underpass collective, trying to apply DIY ethics to the electronic/industrial scene as well as organizing concerts/events and DJing (I am Ex-Pornostar DJ!). And what else, huh, sometimes I eat and sleep… Gabriele and Matteo also play in the sludge band La Cuenta together with Nicola, my fellow DJ-mate in Underpass. It's all in da family!

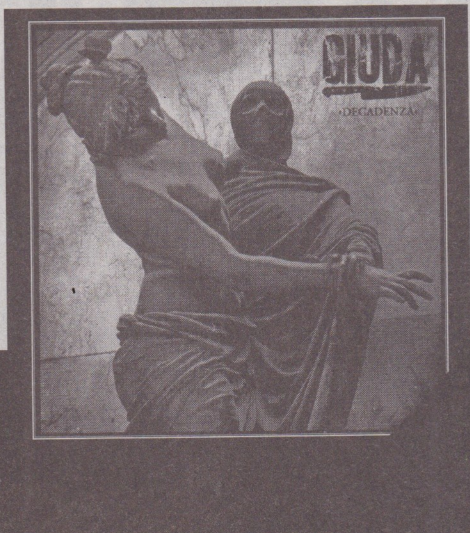
Koppa: I run Agipunk with Mila and Borys. When I'm not on tour I spend my days packing boxes to send all around the globe, tidying records up in the warehouse, loading vans, unloading vans, practicing and booking for bands who wanna play European tours. As I just said, I'm quite often driving around Europe with this and that band as I have a van for rent. Next will be After the Bombs, then Massgrave. For 2009, I'm planning tours with Hellbastard, Iskra, and Germ Attack, plus two or three tours with the other bands I play in (Kontatto, D-beat Scandi blast, and Campus Sterminii, stenchcore bastards). I also have a project band in London with a guy who played in Nailbiter and now is in Give Up All Hope. The band is called Death From Above and we play rip-off 1983 Scandi-style D-beat (Anti-Cimex, Discard, Shitlickers, Crudity...)

Mila: I run Agipunk and I work for a vinyl pressing plant…always poor but I can easily do what I want. I hate having a regular job with a boss…

Gabriele: I try to survive.

MRR: Tell me something about running Agipunk. How did you start working together?

Borys: That's a very important part of our life in general—we put a lot of effort into it. Agipunk was created by Mila in the mid-'90s, in the meantime I was starting up Tetanus and Koppa Disastro Sonoro. I joined Mila in 2004, and Koppa joined us in 2006. Basically we shared a friendship and the same views about running a label/distro, and also it's more effective and pleasant doing the same thing together rather than separately. Right now, we have about 50 releases out, mostly on vinyl, for well-known bands like Wolfbrigade, Ruin, Força Macabra, Prophecy of Doom, Alehammer… Also, old Italian HC reissues like Declino, Eu's Arse, or Rappresaglia, and always supporting the Italian scene (Dirty Power Game, La Piovra, L'Amico Di Martucci, Campus Sterminii, BanxThis, Kontatto). Future releases feature Uncurbed,



Sanctum, Reality Crisis, Mass Grave, Alehammer, Tyrant, and more. Besides the label, there's the mail-order. We love being in touch with people from other labels/distros around the world, we spread our releases as much as possible and we spread other stuff around (in Italy we have nothing like Ebullition—we have to do it ourselves and our own way). We carry a lot of titles and we distribute MCR Company from Japan in Europe. And then the booking and van rental: we have brought to Italy bands like Extinction of Mankind, Wolfbrigade, Avskum, Aghast, Mob 47, Warcollapse... and Uncurbed, After the Bombs, Mass Grave, Hellbastard (!) and more are coming. We keep ourselves busy.

MRR: What are your future plans? New records? Tours?
Borys: By the time this interview will be published, the recordings for the new album will be finished. It's going to be released in time for our US tour in July. And this is a great opportunity for us, thanks to our friend Shravan from Aghast who's booking the whole tour. We'll have the opportunity to play in America for one month. This is great 'cause we are getting very good feedback even though we are not a Swedish band. A lot of US bands always come to play in Europe, and mainly in Germany, but the other side of the route is not exactly jammed. On one hand this is because American anti-terrorism and anti-immigration laws are insane, you never know if you'll succeed in entering the "land of the free." On the other hand, it looks like people there are not very concerned with non-US or non-Swedish bands, and it's the same here, by the way, which is interesting. A lot of things have changed since Crash Box's disastrous tour back in the '80s—in the meanwhile, some friends of ours like Dirty Power Game and La Piovra succeeded in playing over there and showing that we are more than just pasta-eaters, mandolino-players, and mafia-supporters, and besides that we don't speak like the Godfather. The stereotype thing is interesting. There's a crawling stereotype in Europe about Americans being kinda dumb. This is something older than Michael Moore showing American dumb-asses believing all the bullshit about weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. Some Americans I met here experienced this kind of attitude towards them here in Europe. And that's not pleasant, I believe. But a lot of fucking Italians also believe all the bullshit spread by Berlusconi, our personal Senator McCarthy, so it's the same. On the opposite side, the myth of the "American Dream" is still alive even here; many people in Europe look to the USA as the model to follow. Now, for the first time in my life I'll have the possibility to check out directly what the fuck is going on in the planet's politically/economically/culturally(?) leading country, and to check how the many American punx I met in my life are representative of the whole population. We'll also be playing at the Play Fast or Don't Fest in Czech Republic in September, along with Unholy Grave, Wolfbrigade, Selfish, Kontatto, and Gride...super cool!!

MRR: Any last things you'd like to add?
Borys: Heavy Metal is the law!
Koppa: Less talk, more rock!!
Mila: Make football-punx a threat again!
Gabriele: Life is pain and I want to be insane.
Matteo: I love Piero Pelù!

Giuda and Aghast 2008 US Tour Dates
July 3th • Disgraceland, Philadelphia, PA
July 4th • Rocks, Richmond, VA w/ MIDNIGHT, ATTAKE, PARASYTIC, SSR + 1 MORE
July 5th • TPL, Knoxville, TN w/ CITZENS PATROL, LIFE TRAP, THINK TWICE
July 6th • Chattanooga, TN
July 6th • Cave 9, Birmingham, AL
July 7th • Dallas, TX
July 8th • Emo's, Austin, TX w/ Iron Age, Black Congress
July 9th • Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, Albuquerque, NM
July 10th • Tio Leo's, Phoenix, AZ
July 11th • The AWS Outdoor Arena, Long Beach, CA
July 12th • 924 Gilman, Berkeley, CA w/ Coaccion, All Systems Fail, Eskapo, Death by Excess
July 13th • San Francisco or Oakland, CA
July 14th • TBA
July 15th • Northern California
July 16th • Wandering Goat, Eugene, OR w/ Facing Extinction, Warmonger
July 17th • The Know, Portland, OR w/ Dead Section
July 18th • Portland, OR w/ Deathcharge
July 19th • Seattle, WA
July 20th • Black and White's, Idaho Falls, ID w/ All Systems Fail, Bombing Utopia, Fade to Black
July 21st • Day Off
July 22nd • Minneapolis, MN w/ Detonate
July 23rd • Milwaukee, WI
July 24th • Hot Jams Records, Chicago, IL
July 26th • Rochester, NY w/SSR
July 27th • Ottawa, Ontario
July 28th • Montreal, Quebec w/ After the Bombs
July 29th • Boston, MA
July 30th • Connecticut w/ After the Bombs
July 31st • The Cake Shop, New York, NY w/ Perdition, Absurd System
August 1st • Pittsburgh, PA

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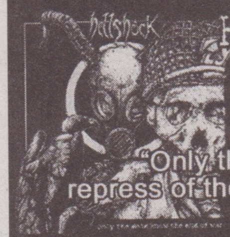

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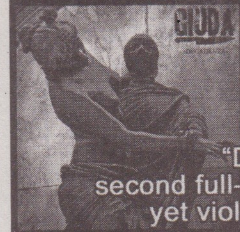

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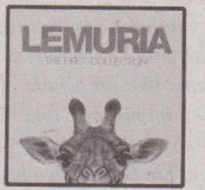

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Sin Orden

After the sonic curtain of razor-sharp riffs and snare blasts come to a near halt, the sweat-drenched members of Sin Orden almost immediately begin packing away their equipment as routinely as night-shift garbage collectors behind schedule. It is not so much that they're in a hurry to be at the next city on their tour itinerary, it's that they haven't yet come down from the fast-paced intensity of their set and their adrenaline levels are still too high to just sit back and relax. As they gradually cool down by breaking down the drum kit or carrying an amp back to their van, show attendees surround and greet them: "You guys ripped"!
"Do you have any records left"?
¿"Que chido carnales, cuando regresan"?
It seems like the whole of New York City's Latino punk scene is in attendance. Immigrant and US-born youth with roots in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico hover around Sin Orden on a late May night in the Lower East Side of Manhattan outside ABC No Rio. Sin Orden are one of the more exciting DIY hardcore bands around today, maturing over the last nine years to become ambassadors of Latino punk and politics to Latino youth and others in cities across the United States. This isn't the result of major availability of their music, but rather their unfaltering work of DIY touring, putting out records, organizing shows in their neighborhoods for visiting bands, and ultimately their message of empowerment that has people listening in every city they play. Like the Bad Brains of old with their PMA (Positive Mental Attitude), Sin Orden too has a message of positivity that has resonated with Latino youth in cities from coast to coast. At the forefront of their music is the Latino/a experience in the US. These four young Mexican-Americans from Chicago's South Side neighborhoods are bringing new conversations and experiences to DIY punk and hardcore, where topics of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and immigration are personalized and shape their take on punk. Not unlike the city of Chicago, whose intricate network of rail lines once connected the country's two coasts, Sin Orden's touring and approach to punk have remapped a new landscape for DIY punk and hardcore connecting Latino youth across different cities.

This interview was conducted with three of the four members: Carlos, Gordo, and Mando. Chucky was unavailable.

Introduction and interview by Mike Amezcua.

Photos by Martin Sorrondeguy & Chayo

MRR: It has been about nine years since Martin Sorrondeguy's film *Mas Alla De Los Gritos*, a documentary about Chicano/Latino punk and hardcore, came out, in which Sin Orden makes an appearance right towards the end when the band is shown practicing in your garage. You must have been about sixteen or seventeen years old at the time. The placing of a young Sin Orden in the film—as the documentary comes to an end—seems to communicate the rise of a new generation of US Latino punk, or at the very least to demonstrate the continuous presence of Chicanos and Latinos in punk and hardcore in the US. What does your presence in this film mean for you? Do you see yourself as part of a larger legacy of Latino punk bands? And how has Sin Orden changed since that documentary first appeared in 1999?

Gordo: I don't necessarily think we thought we were the future or the next punk band, but I guess it just happens that way, sometimes it just unfolds that way.

Carlos: In the beginning, we were talking more on the level of being teenagers and just speaking about our experiences as young people. Nowadays, I mean, even if we tackle issues like racism and whatnot, we bring the perspective of what is going on in our lives, but even some of the issues stay the same as we get older. As for when we started the band whether we felt we were going to be continuing a movement or legacy of Latino punk—I don't think we thought that at all, we were just kids trying to play music and express ourselves. And as for what it is now, it's more about continuing Latino punk and being passionate about it and wanting it to grow.

Mando: I think we try to keep a lot of what we talk about based on personal experience more than on general things. Instead of talking about global peace or racism on a larger scale, we try to keep things closer to what's going on in front of us, whether it is in our city or in our personal lives. During the filming of that documentary, we were a lot younger, so maybe that factored into us being different and speaking about things that were going on with high school-aged youth.

MRR: If you are part of a new generation of Chicano/Latino punk bands, have you found that you are singing about similar things a previous generation sang about, or do you speak to different or new experiences?

Carlos: Well, yeah, I think there might be some similarities between the older bands and the newer bands, but we're really just more concerned about singing about things that get us amped up, things that affect us on the daily, and some of those things may be different from other bands. For us, it's about empowering kids that come to our shows, not letting mainstream American culture take away from who you are and who your family is, where you come from and the language you speak, and so songs like "Nuestra Historia" ("Our History") are about growing up and being taught to assimilate—how you're supposed to forget about everything and learn about what pilgrims did or Europeans did. This is a way of helping kids realize that we went through this and they're going through this; we're pissed too, but we've realized that we need to take it upon ourselves to educate ourselves about who we are and be proud of it. Latino history is usually given a month or a single week of attention in the school year, if that, and we want to promote self-education. You can take as long as you want to learn and educate yourself about who you are; it's a life-long project and there is no time limit on it. In "Somos La Mayoria" ("We Are the Majority"), we grow up hearing that we are a minority—on TV, in school, on the news, on application forms—and we know that we are not a minority, we are a growing majority in many cities across this country, and yet we are still marginalized. So this song is about rejecting the term "minority" and its many connotations and reminding ourselves and others that we are actually a majority in many cities and there's power in recognizing that. The song "Puños En El Aire" ("Fists in the Air") refers to how we're usually looked at like we're not gonna make it, we're not gonna finish school, we're gonna end up doing some low-end job, and so it's about rejecting what American society has destined for Latinos.

Mando: One of the songs that I really like, that I'm really proud of, is "Quiero Ser Pobre" ("I Want to Be Poor"). It's about people who see our neighborhoods (Little Village, Pilsen, Southside Chicago, and others) as "cool" places to live and gentrify. A lot of hardcore kids view poverty as a choice that people make, and a lot of them feel like they have to live like they're poor to feel more a part of what's going on. A lot of these kids come from parents who have nice big houses in the suburbs but they want to move into the inner city because it's cool or chic—especially now with the hipsters in the scene. These kids move into our neighborhoods because they want to live out these fantasies. They feel like there's "so much culture" here; they like how our buildings look, they love our art murals on the walls, the "cute" little grocery stores where you can get cheap Mexican bread. Our communities look the way they do and are shaped the way they are because of legacies of racism and segregation and lack of resources, and what they see is what our people have added on to these spaces. Our communities are not museums for white tourists from the suburbs, but it suddenly feels that way. This is the way we are, this

is the way we live. If our parents had a choice, we wouldn't have lived here or grown up here. My family didn't *choose* to live here. They didn't say, "Let me pass up that nice house in the nice, safe neighborhood and let's live here instead." That wasn't a choice.

MRR: What does "Latino punk" mean as oppose to just "punk"? And what about the utility of the word "punk" itself as a meaningful word today? Should there be another name for what you guys do? For the politics of doing things independently, releasing records independently, booking shows independently, playing independent venues? Should there be a different name for that? Is punk still a valid term or has it been watered down; has it lost its edge, or can it still be useful?

Gordo: I mean, in a sense, it's lost its edge, because you turn on the TV and it's everywhere and everyone wants to be punk, or was punk, or is now post-punk or whatever. But if you think about punk in the traditional way, its roots have been DIY, to do things yourself. I guess we're just trying to keep it original or go back to its roots in that sense.

Carlos: When saying "Latino punk," you are identifying yourself to a culture and identity; the two words together are powerful. Both terms and identities have, at one point or another, carried negative connotations, but they have also been terms of empowerment and so they have that connection together. And for us "Latino" comes before "punk," at least in our lives. We try to introduce the word "razacore," through our music and at our shows, to create a new word for "Latino punk," a word that can empower Chicanos and Latinos in the punk community that says, "This is our own music, our own histories, and our own stories." If we are able to unite and get along and build community, we can be a strong force against whatever challenges lie within and outside of the punk scene.

MRR: I think it is pretty powerful to introduce new terminology or introduce new ways of thinking or being in the world. It's quite ambitious. Could you elaborate more on the term "razacore"? How do you respond to people that might, maybe because they're not Latino or for other reasons, feel excluded from that or may not feel like they're part of that razacore? Do you still reach out to them?

Carlos: We definitely want to reach out to them. This is for anyone, but particularly any person of color, because those are the kids that go to our shows, who connect to the experiences we talk about in our songs and at our shows. We want to reach out to them. And hopefully they can adopt razacore in their scene or maybe create their own word. Basically, razacore is a word to empower or carve out a space to empower; it's not meant to exclude anybody. We want people to walk away with that and create something for themselves or at least learn something from us, as we are learning from them and from all the different people we meet at shows everywhere we play.

Mando: Some people may see it as exclusive, because you are really only targeting a certain group of people—whether it's punks of color or Latinos in our case—but you're just trying to help them. You're not trying to put anybody else down, you're not taking away from anybody; you're just trying to help your own people. I mean, from where we come from, that's not there all the time.

Carlos: The experiences we've had of feeling somehow like we have to suppress who we are because everything around us—our schools and institutions make us feel ashamed of ourselves and make us feel constantly like foreigners—we are rejecting that, pushing away what we have learned, and washing that off from the years and years that they've been shoving it down our face. This is an outlet and we're taking back who we are, our identity and culture. And we just hope that our music helps other kids realize that this shit is not right and that we shouldn't be ashamed of who we are.

MRR: Getting back to this question of the usefulness of the word "punk," in the 1950s, the jazz artist Charles Mingus decided to reject the word "jazz" to describe his music; he thought the word was too commercialized, that it had lost its meaning, he didn't want to apply it to his music. Thinking along those lines, can the same be said about punk? How would you guys like your music to be described or labeled? Is it hardcore/punk? Is it something else?

Carlos: It is razacore. It's fast, it's loud, it's got hooks and breakdowns, and we put all that together with our stories, our roots, our culture. It's about empowerment; sometimes it's about tragedy, sometimes it's about anger, and that's what we call razacore.

Mando: I see it as a musical interpretation of our lives; we try to make it personal, 'cause I think you could only speak, you could only feel, you could only project certain emotions if you really feel them. If you can't really identify with what you're talking about, I don't feel that you can put your whole heart into it, you know, and if you're not playing what you want to play, you can't put your whole heart into it. Part of the reason why our music is fast or thrashy or whatever is because that's the limit of our emotion into it. We can't sing about what we're singing about and just be relaxed back there while playing, you know what I mean? That's that emotion coming out and it has to be—or in our case, the way we feel about—at that level, at that pace.

MRR: While your songs are challenging the power of an American culture that pacifies and assimilates people, the medium with which you've chosen to tell these stories has been…well, you are using an art form that can arguably be seen as a very American cultural product.

Carlos: I don't think punk is American culture—punk has become worldwide, international, and we are using the ideas of punk to express ourselves. I feel shows are the classrooms that we would've loved to be in, because we've probably learned more about the world through punk than we have ever learned in any school environment we have been in. From being on tour, seeing bands coming to Chicago from other cities and other countries, and hearing firsthand of what they've experienced in their cities and countries, we've learned a lot. It's a great way to learn; we're using punk as this worldwide movement to tell our stories and hear from everyone else, and so in that sense I don't think punk is American or North American.

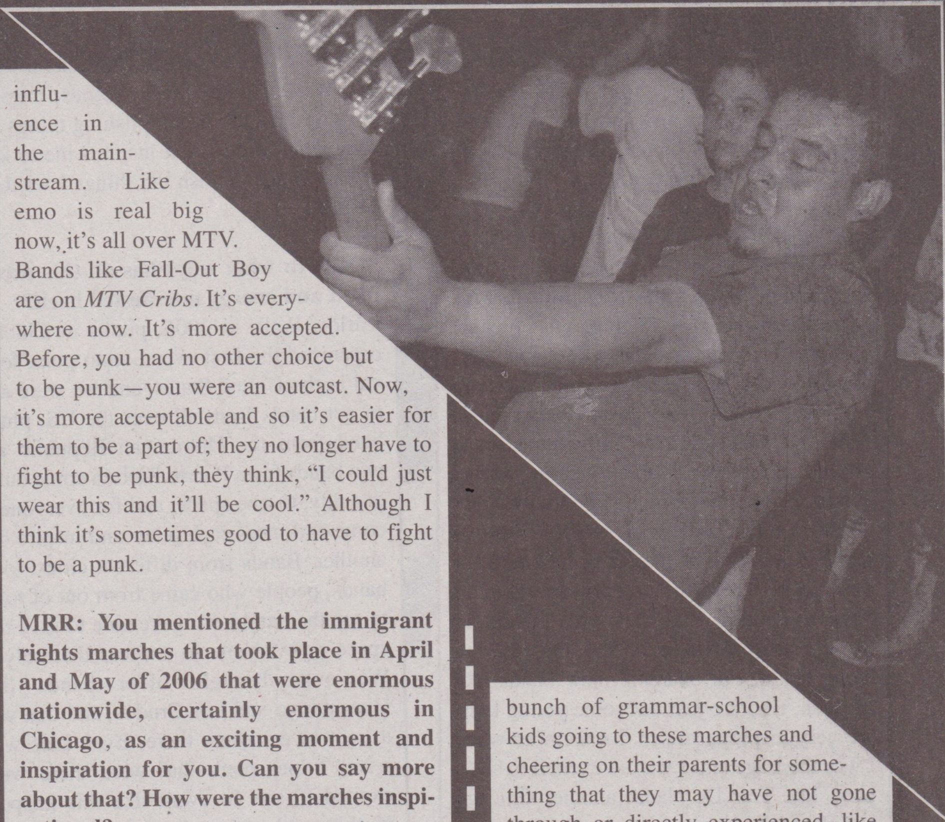
MRR: What would you say, as young artists trying to engage with other people through ideas and music as well as just as the creative people that you are, is exciting for you right now? What's happening in the world that makes you want to say something about it? What are the things that are driving Sin Orden today?

Carlos: For me, it's a very local thing. I get excited seeing the youth centers popping up in the Mexican neighborhoods of Chicago. For the first time, I am hearing kids calling themselves "Chicanos"—a term I never heard being used in Chicago. The immigrant rights' movement right now is really motivating; to see people coming out fighting for what they believe in is amazing, especially to see all the immigrants speaking out for themselves. What else? I mean, all the Latino punk kids coming up and starting bands and saying amazing things about their stories.

Mando: I see a lot of more punk-looking kids around schools here, kids wearing things like skinny black jeans, converse, spiked jackets. A lot more than I remember even six or seven years ago from being in high school that it seems like it's cool now. Maybe it's a trendy thing, but even though it might be mainstream, I think it's still a step closer to learning about DIY punk and hardcore. Because, I mean, you're not born into it, you know. You just don't stumble across DIY hardcore here in our neighborhoods; you need to meet people and stuff. If you're not even remotely into it, you're never going to find it.

MRR: What do you think is the reason for there being more punk-looking kids in the kinds of high schools you came out of?

Mando: I think there is just more of a punk influence in the mainstream. Like emo is real big now, it's all over MTV. Bands like Fall-Out Boy are on *MTV Cribs*. It's everywhere now. It's more accepted. Before, you had no other choice but to be punk—you were an outcast. Now, it's more acceptable and so it's easier for them to be a part of; they no longer have to fight to be punk, they think, "I could just wear this and it'll be cool." Although I think it's sometimes good to have to fight to be a punk.



MRR: You mentioned the immigrant rights marches that took place in April and May of 2006 that were enormous nationwide, certainly enormous in Chicago, as an exciting moment and inspiration for you. Can you say more about that? How were the marches inspirational?

Gordo: It's inspirational to see so many young people involved. Some of those kids marching are immigrants themselves or have parents that are immigrants. They go through the same things, so it's inspiring for us to see that. I think, overall, it's exciting because there are so many Latinos in Chicago. There are many Mexican-American kids that have parents that are immigrants and they see their parents struggling and being targeted by immigration officers, like on 26th Street checking for *micas* (green cards) and shit like that, so these kids feel like, "man, they're targeting my family, maybe I'm not an immigrant, but I can say something against that and speak out." I think it's inspiring in that sense, so many kids come marching alongside their cousins or uncles or parents that to this day still might not have papers (legal residency documents) and are struggling. It's very inspirational to see six- or seven-year-old kids coming out to these marches. They may or may not have an idea of what they're marching about, but later on in life they're going to realize that it was for their parents and for themselves. You have a lot more kids becoming aware of these rights that are getting stripped away, and people are fed up and want to say something about that. That's inspiring, you know, and the whole city feels it. They might not like it, people might not like it, that all these brown people are marching down their street, but they can't take that away from us. It's pretty inspiring when you see a bunch of grammar-school kids going to these marches and cheering on their parents for something that they may have not gone through or directly experienced, like crossing the border, but realize that because of who they are, they also get treated like immigrants. I think it's pretty exciting to be a part of that and especially in cities like Chicago, LA, and other large immigrant cities where people are turning out huge numbers.

Carlos: Especially when hearing that they organized walkouts in high schools and grammar schools—that's the kind of stuff you read about going on the 1960s. I mean, this is history in the making, this is what people are gonna be reading about in 20 years, and for these kids to be a part of history is amazing and it's very inspiring.

Mando: I think what the marches do too is they open up people's eyes to the realization that not all Latinos are immigrants, because a lot of people are still closed-minded about that. A lot of people just have this ignorance that Mexicans have only been around in the last five years or something. I mean, my family has been here over 50 years, but people still act like I just fucking swam across the river like last week. It makes things like that more aware, a lot of these families are walking around saying, "Hey man, this is our country, we've been here too, it's not like we just walked over here," you know?

MRR: You mentioned you've been inspired by local things happening

in Chicago. What about local music? There seems to be an explosion of Latino punk bands in Chicago. Where are all these bands coming from?

Gordo: From all over. I mean, you have Latinos that are from the North Side of Chicago and you have Latinos that are coming from the South Side. I just think that it's the excitement of everything in Chicago, with the marches and the school walkouts and all that. There's a rise in youth activism and it's not totally disconnected from music either. It exists within the Latino punk scene as well and it's really about wanting to feel a part of something bigger, you know. Punk allows for that, it's whatever you want to make it. It's kind of like an open forum for these kids, where they otherwise wouldn't have something like that with which, to express themselves and feel like they're being heard. For example, new bands like Intifada, who are just awesome young kids, are very inspiring to see. I remember when I was their age and I was so excited to see a band like Tras De Nada [another Chicago band] and be inspired by the fact that they were there and in your face and proud to be Mexican. I felt so empowered by that.

Carlos: To hear these new bands, to hear the things that they talk about… I get jaded a lot with punk, so when I hear a new band letting it all out and putting out records and telling their stories, it inspires me to be able to help that band out and have their music, to be able to keep it and read it, and document it. All these stories might never be heard by the public, by the mainstream, but kids in the hardcore scene might get exposed to it. Also to recognize that kids are not just punks, they're graffiti writers, they're artists, they're involved in other music scenes, they are activists that are accomplishing things that they want to do—that inspires me to keep trying to accomplish the things I want out of life.

MRR: In what ways has all this excitement and energy manifested itself?

Carlos: Well, in 2006, punks in Chicago organized the first ever Latino punk festival in the United States, and we were able to get bands from all over the US, plus a band from the Dominican Republic and two bands from Puerto Rico to come out to one city, to one space, and for everyone to come and meet each other and inspire one another. Bands from different cities, local bands, people who came from out of town to see the bands; we were able to give this space to everyone to express themselves. We even brought older bands like Huasipungo and Los Crudos, and that was a treat to everyone there. Even kids who weren't into punk that were there were excited to see an event like this happen. Nothing like that had ever happened before. We're working on another one this year. [The second Latino Fest took place in October 2007. Be on the lookout for 2008.]

MRR: To have an event like that is incredible. Could an event like that have happened ten or twenty years ago? What is different now that something like that was able to happen?

Mando: I think maybe people were afraid of calling it a "Latino Fest," and afraid of taking a stand and saying, "You know what, if you're not Latino we're not gonna let you play"; I think that is something that people might have been afraid of doing before for fear of excluding folks and whatnot. But I think we've gotten to the point were we realized "you know, were not alone, there's a lot of us out there" and were able to say that "you know what, this is just gonna be for us," a space of our own to come together, from all over the country, from big cities to small towns, and other countries, all with a common goal but all with different ideas, and all with different things to say. And I think before it might have been harder to say, "This is just going to be for Latino bands," maybe there was a wall there before; that came down somewhere along the line that we said, "It's gonna be OK that we're going to do this."

Carlos: And maybe in the past, there weren't that many bands out there for a fest.

MRR: Do you think so? Maybe twenty years ago, but what about ten years ago? Could you say more about this change of going from being uncomfortable to having something called a "Latino Fest"? In other words, making that move to say "no, we *are* gonna have it."

Gordo: We realizing that punk is ours also, and, like you've said before, the whole concept of "hijacking punk" and infusing it with your own politics. That attitude remains true now, I think, with all the bands in all the different cities. There's more of a unified consciousness that might not have been there before, and maybe that sense was there back then but I think it might be more exciting now or more people are realizing that this is ours too and we have something to say about it. I think it wasn't that there weren't enough bands to pull something like that off—there were more than enough bands—but it was just maybe that people were just nervous to do it. "Is it right? Who will we be excluding?" I mean, people hold punk fests all the time, and more often than not there won't be a single Latino punk band or other band of color on the bill, so in true DIY fashion, Latino kids in Chicago got organized and did their own. I mean, people are going to say whatever they're going to say, but you can't take that away from us.

MRR: How many nights was the first Latino Fest? How many bands played overall?

Carlos: Two nights. Eighteen to twenty bands, something like that.

MRR: What makes it a "Latino" fest besides the obvious being that Latino bands are playing? What made this fest distinguishable in other ways from say, other punk fests?

Carlos: It was the issues, it was the language; you heard more people speaking

in Spanish than you would at other punk and hardcore fests in the US. It was about the different cultures that can be described as "Latino," and hearing personalized stories you just aren't going to hear from other bands—many punk bands can talk about racism and whatnot, but not many can talk about being targets of racism. They don't have direct ties to it.

MRR: It seems to be an exciting time for DIY Latino punk and hardcore across the nation, with things like the fest and the number of active bands around from places like Watsonville and San Jose, Chicago, South Texas, New Jersey, and New York City. Do you get the feeling that there's more of a unified sense of community among the Latino punk bands? Do you feel a close bond to these bands?

Carlos: Certainly. I mean, by touring we've been able to play with and meet a lot of these bands, and we consider them our friends. It's a great feeling to be on the road and know that we're gonna play together and hang out at some point. When we get together, we feel this sense of familiarity with them as if we're back home, and we talk and exchange ideas, we trade records, we tell our stories of our home in Chicago, and they tell us about Watsonville, or what is going on in New York City with immigrant rights. We know if we're in this city, we can call this person in Los Angeles or San Francisco, and we know we can probably count on a place to stay and that we're going to be fed, we're going to meet their families and it's probably going to remind us of home. We are all in it trying to create this larger movement of empowerment and expression.

MRR: Is one of the things that make it "Latino punk" singing in Spanish? Can there be other ways to imagine Latino punk? Is there some kind of unstated rule that you have to sing in Spanish to be considered a Latino punk band, like you can't sing in English, or you can't be bilingual or introduce your bilingualism or biculturalism into the music? How do you guys feel about that? I feel like there are bands out there, for example, Piñata Protest from San Antonio, who I think sing in both languages, but in addition bring other elements of being Mexican or being Latino into their music with their blending of punk with conjunto/norteño music and their use of the accordion. They may be, knowingly or not, challenging the notion that Latino punk bands must sing in Spanish to be considered as such. Thoughts?

Carlos: I don't believe that you necessarily have to sing in Spanish. I mean, not all our songs are in Spanish, but we do try to write most of our songs in Spanish. There are many Latino bands that don't sing in Spanish and that's fine too—they're telling their stories and you don't necessarily have to sing in Spanish, because, of course, if you were born here, most of your life you've probably had to speak in English. If that's all you know, who are we to judge? It's not like we are saying that we're perfect Spanish speakers, because we're not, and the hybrid of the two languages I think is awesome and it should be used if that's how you speak and feel comfortable. That's how we speak.

MRR: There are some bands that say, "Well, we sing in Spanish because that's the best language we speak," or, "I'm an immigrant and I'm most comfortable in Spanish," but for those who are not immigrants, for Latinos born or raised in the US, why do you sing in Spanish? What is so important about singing in Spanish to you?

Carlos: It's still part of our culture; it's what some of us speak at home, so we're also comfortable with it. But even for those of us who are not comfortable with Spanish, it's a conscious act of remembering it, because growing up in this country and going through the educational system here, there are systematic ways of making kids forget or deny the languages they speak at home if that language isn't English. Once you are in the school system, you're expected to learn and speak English, and being bilingual is just not really welcomed in this country, or it's not welcomed if that second language is Spanish. If you're a bilingual person, you are pegged as not being as smart as others, as if knowing one language is better than know-

ing two. It's a systematic process of forcing you to forget where you come from or who you are, and so that's one of the reasons that we actively write songs and sing in Spanish, even though we were born here. It's an act of remembering or relearning what we have been socialized or sometimes forced to forget.

Mando: Plus, if you're a Latino band and you have issues that you want to talk about with other Latinos, your main audience speaks the Spanish language. Even in the US, if those are the people who you want to speak to, then you're better off speaking a language that the majority use and that's Spanish.

Carlos: To target Latinos that way, but using it as a positive to empower instead of trying to put them down, you are Latinos—"You're not worth nothing, you are just going to be a gangbanger, or all you are good for is to work at McDonalds, or you're just another body to send to war." So we use Spanish also to target Latinos in a positive way so that's why it's important for us to do it in Spanish.

MRR: I'm often disappointed with the kind of record reviews Latino hardcore bands get in zines and other forums that review records. When a hardcore band sings in Spanish, often the comparison is made to Los Crudos—"Sounds like Crudos," or "If you like Crudos, you'll like this band"—which I understand can be helpful to stores and distros or someone just looking for a good hardcore record, but it strikes me as problematic to only have this one single reference as a point of comparison. Can you say something about what problems those comparisons might have, or if you see a problem with those comparisons at all, or maybe just what it means for Latino hardcore records when they're reviewed to always be compared to a band like Los Crudos, who hold such a powerful place in the pantheon of DIY hardcore punk. Is it a problem that bands like Sin Orden or Outraged might get compared to Los Crudos? Can they be reviewed on their own merits or terms?

Mando: I think it's hard because, well, it shows a couple of things. One of the bad things is if you don't feel like you're comparable to Los Crudos and somebody puts you in that situation, it takes away from what you did and what you feel that you did in accomplishing and making a record. But a lot of the times, if somebody reads that and they don't like Los Crudos—that doesn't necessarily mean that they're not going to like you—but according to that review they might think, "Oh, it's just another Crudos copy band," you're already in those categories of being Latino and you're from Chicago and it's hardcore punk, it's gotta be the same. And it's not. It's different and it also shows that people who write that stuff are lazy. They can't come up with anything else. Their range of words to describe hardcore and punk in Spanish is limited. Either that, or it's all one indistinguishable style to them.

Gordo: It's almost as if it's in Spanish and it's fast, it has to get compared to Crudos. But just because it's in Spanish and it's punk doesn't necessarily mean it sounds remotely close to Los Crudos, and that's what's unfair to bands like Outraged, Sin Orden, or Tras De Nada. These bands don't write music to sound like Crudos, they're just playing and writing what they feel. White hardcore bands get the benefit of the doubt and are compared to a wide range of bands and things. A band sings in Spanish and it automatically gets compared to Crudos and I don't know if that's going to change. I mean, don't get us wrong, it's an honor to be compared to Crudos, but at some point it just gets very limiting if that's the only reference people can make when describing the Latino/Chicano punk scene, and it dismisses all the other influences these bands have that may be musical or non-musical, that may be political, that may have to do with lived experience or local issues, etc. And I agree with Mando—it's being lazy, it's a copout and taking the easy way. "They're from Chicago, they sing in Spanish, they're punk, hmmm, conclusion... They're like Los Crudos." It's unfair if you think about it, not taking anything away from Los Crudos—hell, we grew up to Los Crudos! And I'm sure they themselves would say it's not fair. Sure, there are commonalities, but there are differences as well. There's a lot more to these bands then the on-the-surface comparisons suggest.

MRR: When Sin Orden is dead and gone, should it be forgotten or should it be remembered? Why and how?

Mando: I would just like to be thought of as a band that inspired somebody else to do something, because a lot of what we do is based on inspiration by others. I would be very happy to know that if somebody got something out of it and they're a band sitting there looking at their first 7" and it was because they saw us at a show and thought it would be possible to start a band. I always think that's the greatest thing you could pass on—inspiration to somebody else.

Gordo: It would be nice to be thought of as a band that spoke out on all the issues that we felt needed to be presented to people in the punk scene. That we were always a band that never downplayed anything—we always said what we felt. What Carlos wrote was real, it really happened, this band was never bullshitting, was always trying to be legit. Trying to inspire people by us doing what we thought we needed to do and that spoke out or played shows even if there was nothing but gringo bands on the bill and spoke about issues they may not bring up, or know about, or relate to.

MRR: Future plans and projects?

Carlos: We will be touring Japan in October. We're very excited about that. It'll be our first time there. [This happened already in Oct. '07, Japan rocked hard.] We also recorded for our first full-length CD/LP that will be released by the Emma Navajas record label in the spring of 2008 as well as a split 7" with Condenada.

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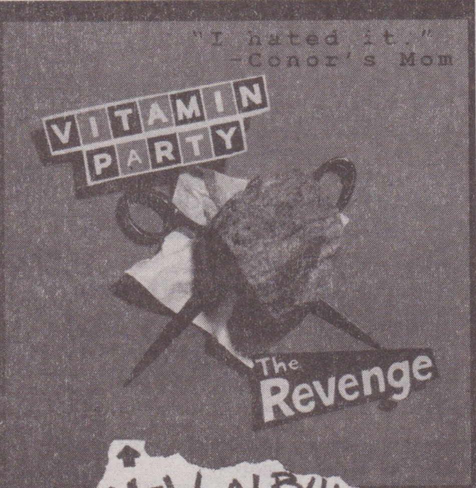

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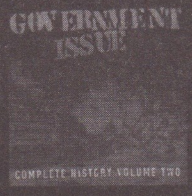

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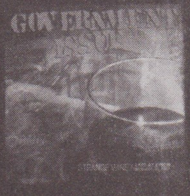

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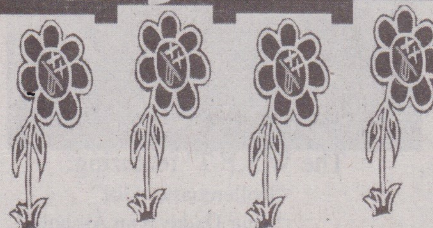

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TIME

I remember the first time I heard VA's Wasted Time; someone, who shall remain nameless, was listening to a stack of records in preparation for a great purge, when some of the most venomous sounds I'd heard in a while came booming down the hall. My interest was instantly piqued, so I couldn't help but venture in to see just what the hell I had been missing out on. Spinning atop the turntable was the first Wasted Time EP. Upon closer inspection Wasted Time actually have a good head on their shoulders, which, in stark contrast to the club-wielding early-man that their sound resembles, is rather refreshing in today's hardcore scene. Needless to say the 7" survived the purge. Read on my children. Interview by Scott Moore. Introduction by Justin Briggs. All photos by Al Quint and Martin Sorrondeguy.

MRR: Who is Wasted Time and how long have you been a band?

Mark: Wasted Time is Mick, Zach, Brandon, and me. We have been doing this for a bit over three years now. Jason used to play drums but had a baby and had some other stuff happen. Eric fills in every now and then and there have been talks of him taking over bass duties while Zach heads over to second guitar, but that will become a reality whenever we decide to practice again. That's about it. Eric, say hello.

MRR: I know that people have moved since the start of the band. Where did you start and where is the band based out of right now?

Mark: When I starting talking to Mick and Zach about doing this, I had been living in Richmond for a few months due to school and a relationship that I was in at the time, so I've been up here since the beginning. They were in the beach area at the time, along with Jason.

Mick: May I add that I moved to Richmond because of a girl, and that you should never do that under any circumstances? All turned out for the best though; I love Richmond and four out of five of us live here.

Mark: Yeah, by the time I'd moved up here, Brandon had been up in Richmond for a while from being in the 'Waste and all. He actually lived a block away from my first place, so I ended up running into him a lot and even asking him to do the art for the first 7". When we needed a drummer for our second tour that we did, he gladly filled the boots and it kind of just stuck from there.

Brandon: Yeah, I'm glad I got asked to fill in, either that or I just weaseled my way in. I still to this day have people coming up to me being like, "Oh, I didn't know you're in Wasted Time!" This band is a lot of fun for me. I don't really have to go off doing fills, or much crazy shit. Just hitting the shit out of the drums and keeping a good steady pace. Also, I really like living here, I don't see myself moving for a while.

Zach: I currently live with my folks in Moyock, North Carolina, out in the country (about 40 minutes from Virginia Beach and two hours from Richmond), but I'm moving to Norfolk, VA this fall for school.

Brandon: Yeah, I can't see myself moving anywhere else, not at least for a while. Too many responsibilities, bands, shit, and partying here is fun and we do have the best scene in the world.

MRR: Are there any shows happening in more rural places around the Virginia/North Carolina area? People don't generally know about the tucked-away pockets of punk scenes in the small towns, but sometimes those can be some of the coolest places to play.

Mark: Harrisonburg, VA has potential to be pretty awesome sometimes. We played the basement/laundry room of an apartment complex and got a mix of townies, college kids, and punks and it was hectic. I also hear that Charlottesville has some decent gigs emerging every now and then. Virginia has some areas that are *way* more rural than that and I don't know how well a gig would go down in those parts. The same can be said for North Carolina, but I'm not aware of many other places there besides Raleigh and Asheville.

MRR: What was it like being a punk in Virginia Beach? Is there a heavy beach-bro vibe going on?

Brandon: Virginia Beach is nasty and boring.

Mick: It was easy for me. I don't dress the part, so I blended in pretty well. Plus, I'm a handsome guy so that helps. The bro vibe doesn't bother me; most of my friends in high school, and even a lot of the hardcore kids were bro-ish. I don't care enough about anything to let stupid people bother me.

Mark: The high school I went to could go either way; you'd have some bros that would try to start some shit and others that were rather indifferent. There would be the occasional altercation or someone calling me a "fag" or whatever, but it was nothing to lose sleep over. As far as bros at shows, the Tidewater area is a huge navy town, hence those types would randomly come out every now and then. Again, it would go either way. Sometimes it would and still does go bad for them, or vice versa.

Zach: I'm with Mick on this one, except that I'm not very handsome.

MRR: Your first single came out as a split release between Grave Mistake and Brain Grenade records. Brain Grenade put out bands like War Hungry and Iron Boots. When I think of Wasted Time and the bands that you guys play with, I think of you being more a part of the whole No Way/Grave Mistake Records scene, which seems to be a whole other animal. Are you guys footed in one scene more than the other? Is there as much of a divide between these scenes in Virginia as in other places?

Mark: I used to live with Greg who did Brain Grenade at the time and he had witnessed some of our earlier gigs, hence he was excited to be a part of the 7" whenever it came out. The Iron Boots dudes have been our friends for a while, and my first band ever was with David, but I'd definitely say that we end up playing with more of the other side of the spectrum, which is fine. So I guess our footing would lean more towards the "No Way/Grave Mistake" side of the tracks. But of course, there are plenty of kids, even some of us, who dabble in each side. I really like *Alpha Omega* by the Cro-Mags—I'm hard like that. The divide is present, but I'm not too bothered by it.
Brandon: Yeah, I don't think we're really in the Iron Boots/War Hungry or whatever scene as much as the other. I remember when that EP was coming out I had no idea on earth what Brain Grenade was. Still don't, really.
Mick: That divide is everywhere. I'd say 90-percent of the time we play with bands that sound like us or wish they sounded like us.

MRR: Grave Mistake and No Way seems to have cultivated a buzz for the Virginia/North Carolina area. Are you guys happy with the attention that your scene gets? Where there is good there is always bad. Have there been any unforeseen downsides to the popularity?
Mark: I think Richmond has some great shit happening right now—it's a cool time to be a part of things. When I first moved here, there wasn't too much happening besides the occasional underattended Direct Control gig and other stuff that didn't really hold my attention. Brandon and Lauren have definitely been a big part of making things happen; more exciting touring bands coming through, No Way Records Fest, No Way Records itself, etc. They, along with Alex DiMatessa of Grave Mistake Records, have also put out a plethora of great releases. I can't really complain. New bands like Deadly Sins and The Ladies springing up in Richmond, and Socialcide, Bomber, and Archaic down in the Virginia Beach area only make it all the more interesting.

Mick: I don't think I can name one negative thing about the attention our area gets. I think we have one of, if not the best "scene" in the country. How many other areas can say they have the same amount of great bands in a five-mile area?
Mark: Also, Virginia and North Carolina have a very lush history together and I'm glad to see that pattern repeating itself. Bands like Double Negative, Cross Laws (R.I.P.), and Logic Problem are genuinely exciting. It's always a good time to play down in Raleigh. Things have changed for the better; I welcome it.
Brandon: Yeah, I'd like to think we've got in going on down here, lots of fun...there's a few more bands that need mentioning like Empty Grave from RVA and Devour from Raleigh, NC. Booking shows here is sometimes really stressful, but I'm more a stressed-out person anyways, so maybe it's just me. I always put too much on my plate.
Mark: On a petty side note, one of the annoying aspects is the whole MySpace messages thing from tons of annoying bands looking to play here. I was talking to Alex D about this recently and Government Warning gets the same thing a lot as well. It seems as if all one must do is record some songs on their computer, make a tape/CD-R, post on a bunch of message boards, then send you an impersonal message demanding $150 bucks while guaranteeing a "good time" or some shit. Maybe I just hate/don't understand the internet, though.

MRR: One of the major criticisms that I hear about the bands is that they are all "retro," add nothing to the style, and cut and paste this part and that part from US '82 hardcore records. Do you feel like a retro band? If you feel like you have something to add, what is it?
Mark: People convey feelings in different ways, I suppose this is just our way of doing it. I don't claim to be a renaissance man by any means, I'm not trying to add anything as a means of for-

warding "hardcore" or "punk" or whatever. I have my shit to deal with and this is my approach of choice when things feel out of control or what have you. It's neat that some people like it or dislike it, but at the end of the day I can't say that I'm affected in any particular way.
Brandon: Yeah, I agree with what they're saying. Not trying to be anything, just doing what we wanna do that sounds good to us, and not being like "dood, that part was sooooo Choke, play that SSD-style breakdown again!"
Mick: I will say, I took way more influences from our peers and current bands then I did from any '82 band.
Zach: Retro band or not, we're not trying to set any kind of new grounds. We listen to hardcore, and that's what we play.

MRR: There seems to be a cool exchange with some punks from the '80s and bands from your scene. You guys play with bands like Double Negative, who has members of the '80s band Subculture. There was also the recent Neon Christ reunion in Atlanta. How is this happening and what was the reaction when they saw what you guys have going on?
Mark: If memory serves me correct, Walsby documented him and the rest of the Double Negative dudes catching a gig at the now defunct Thrashitorium down in Raleigh in his comic book *Manchild*. This was a few years ago now and his description is dead on as to how flooring that show was, and it may or may not be contributed to those gentlemen deciding to have another go at it all. Regardless, I'm stoked that they did, because not only are they stellar people but they blow most bands out of the water. Richmond and Raleigh have their share of older folks who don't have inflated egos due to the fact that they saw some awesome shit—you don't find that in too many other places, it seems.

MRR: The lyrics are very well written and it seems like there was a lot of thought put into them. Sometimes when I read bands' lyrics, they seem like an afterthought to the music. How important is the lyrical aspect of you band?
Mark: Music and lyrics are both of equal intensity and importance to me. They go hand in hand. When I was younger, of course the music itself was what caught me at first, but upon further listening, the lyrics of hardcore punk bands that I grew up on were of the utmost importance to me. Hence, my personal expression isn't any less important in that way. I'm OK with the occasional funny song or whatever, but most of that shit is fucking boring. If one's expression is to talk about fucking and/or being a junkie or whatever is cool and hip now with ex-youth crew kids who picked up girl jeans, coke habits, and started calling themselves "punk," have fun with that, but don't call me a lamer for not being a chump and buying into that shit. How cute.
Zach: Mark's lyrics are loooong. Pull up a chair when reading.
Mark: Wahhhh!
Mick: I don't really pay attention to what any band has to say. Honestly, I just enjoy the music. That was a serious answer.
Brandon: I'm with Mick on this one, as long as it's nothing *too* fucked up, I'm OK with it. The music is always what gets me too.

MRR: Lyrics such as, "The one place that I thought that I could get away has degenerated into a thoughtless game," from "Stranger" on the first single, really seem to be about feeling discontent with your peers. What was your inspiration for writing this song? Do you think that a lot of younger kids end up feeling this way and bailing on punk?
Mark: I guess it was just from being in a town with a bunch of cool guys and the little kids that worshipped them. That shit was and still is serial-killer weird; I'll never understand having an ego trip off of a hardcore punk band. Pedophilia was also a big thing for some reason—so creepy. I just couldn't relate to people I had been going through the motions with for a while. It just wasn't a place I wanted to live and die in and I can't say I was too stoked on being a part of any of that other stuff, so the relocation was pretty easy. In regards to younger kids

feeling this way, that's a possibility, but I could care less what they do. Drop out.

MRR: My interpretation of the lyrics from the song "Leech" is that they are about the CrimethInc set of political punks. Civic Progress, who are friends of yours, have a song called "CrimethInc Is a Joke." Am I right in my assumption about those lyrics? If so, what is it about that faction of the scene that is making them the target?

Mark: Word up to Civic Progress—great minds think alike. The lack of true conviction behind newly acquired beliefs when mom and dad drop you at the VCU dorms is laughable at best. The lack of consistancy and total hypocrisy are just the icing on the cake. I'm usually "live and let live"—I got other shit to worry about—but at the end of the day I don't like being fucked with or belittled by these types. I'm always glad to hear that said song makes those types uncomfortable.

Brandon: All's I gotta say is that I grew up in punk around a lot of CrimethInc-influenced people, and people that were directly part of it, and they never really pushed anything down my throat or anything like that. I'm not defending that scene, but I mean, everyone has their own thing that they are way into and that's theirs. I actually got along really well, jokin' around with a bunch of 'em. I think that everyone in some way, shape, or form is gonna end up supporting a corporation, whether it be beer, cigs, socks, candy, whatever—everybody's a hypocrite. I just live my life trying not to worry too much about bullshit, because sooner than later we'll all be dead and nothing that you do will matter, unless you're trying to make history books in the next age, if there is one. One more thing; the drummer of Catharsis was a fucking ripper! Influenced me early on for sure.

Zach: It seems a lot of those punks are just posing hard. They're more worried about where the party's at and how their hair and stretch jeans look rather than music and the state of things. I can't count how many times I'll go to a show and see these morons with a case of beer in one hand standing outside trying to get in the door for free 'cause they "have no money."

MRR: Has it come up before? Do people know that its about them and take offence?

Mark: Never to my face of course, just second hand from other people. I'd like to think of myself as a rather approachable person and if someone thinks my lyrics are about them or are offended by them, they can confront me. But at the end of the day, those types fear actual confrontation, so it's really not a big surprise to me. It's just another boring trend with equally boring people.

Zach: People are too chicken-shit to say anything to anyone's face most of the time. I mean, that's what the internet's for, right?

MRR: A lot of your lyrics would lead me to believe that your worldview is essentially the same as someone that you sing about in a song like "Leech." What is it about "these fashionites and pseudo activists" that is causing such a point of contention?

Mark: That I don't buy into their gig. I don't believe what they're pushing. It comes off as fake and prefabricated. Why would I want to align with someone who I cannot believe? It's just not an option for me. They can do their thing and I'll do mine, simple as that, but I refuse to give any legitimacy to it all.

MRR: What do you think it is that they are pushing? Is it the core of the beliefs or the way they present said beliefs?

Mark: The presentation, the way they do it. It just comes off as a total lack of tact in the way it is thrown out there, and not to mention the afforementioned fact that there is no consistancy and that the agendas are everchanging. And again, this wouldn't normally bother me due to having my own shit to worry about, but the whole "in your face" act with a lack of restraint and logic just comes off as utterly stupid. All in all, these are my experiences, hence my conclusions and documentation on them. My venting, if you will.

MRR: Do you think that there is a way to have convictions and live by your ideals and not come off as pompous?

Mark: Of course! If it's something that one is passionate about, they eventually find a way to present it without coming off as a dumbass. Plain and simple, I don't see how people honestly think they can effectively get a point across while being overly pompous. Maybe some people will buy it, but I don't think it will be that well received by the general populous, which I'd imagine would be the point.

Zach: Amen.

MRR: I am of the opinion that over the years it's people like the aforementioned who are responsible for so many punks being apolitical, and in a lot of cases it pushes people in a right-wing direction. The general attitude now is more towards "fuck everything." Do you think that it is time to throw in the gloves and officially divorce politics from hardcore? Fuck everything and become the redneck that most of us were trying to get away from when we got into punk in the first place?

Mark: Personally, I'm not one to accept that type of mediocrity, or what have you, and become dumb and unaware. I like being coherent and aware of what's going on around me, especially with shit the way it is, so I don't see myself going down

they're changing something, they're just kind of dumb. A total exercise in futility.
Zach: I don't have a problem with any Christians (punk or not) as long as they aren't trying to "spread the message of the great lord" and aiming to convert me.

MRR: What's up next for the Wasted Time machine?
Mark: We are currently writing for a full-length or something like that. Life is busy for all of us, so we're doing it at our own pace with no real deadlines or any of that. As far as touring, we've all agreed that we would like to eventually head across the pond and do some gigs over there, and perhaps some more gigs around the States. In the meantime, just the occasional gig in Virginia or North Carolina and taking it easy. Doing what we can when we can.
Mick: Just another day in paradise.
Brandon: Yeah, hopefully we can get this LP rolling, the four songs we have are pretty ripping!

MRR: Do you feel like what you are doing is going to have any lasting effect?
Zach: I personally don't. It's not like we've broken any ground or anything; we play a basic style of hardcore that's been repeated.
Mark: I'll remember it.
Mick: No, not really.
Brandon: I don't know either, I hope so. I mean, I hope after we break up that people will still couch mosh to "And So It Goes."

MRR: Any last words?
Mick: Big ups to Jeff Boone, I envy your ankles and your Herculean physique.
Zach: Nah man, not really.
Mark: Thanks for the interview, always nice talking with you, sir. Word up to Steckman, Sunshine Santiago, Eric "Latino Heat" Montanez, HPM (King of Men), Tony Bitch, LO-LO, Ovens, Bad Boy Brace Belden, Baybay, Yah-Nee-Kwa, Black Snake Ent., and all the other hardcore-punkmetal freaks out there. Hardcore, gimme some more.
Brandon: Hardcore rules!

that particular route. Apathy can be easy to submit to; I guess it just depends on the person and how hard or soft they are. Chances are that if they let something as trivial, yet definitely annoying, as the aforementioned clowns drive them to become the equivalent to a washed-up, thoughtless redneck, then they probably didn't have what it takes in the first place. Hope they have fun with that though—different folks different strokes, I suppose. Maybe they can try to beat me up when I'm walking through Oregon Hill?
Zach: I try to keep up with world issues on a somewhat daily basis, but that doesn't mean I want everything politically charged in the music I listen to and play. I get bored. When I got into hardcore/punk, I wasn't attracted to a political aspect of trying to break from the system or regular/norm or some shit. I mean, I grew up in the suburbs.

MRR: What inspired you to write a song about the religious zealot Pat Robertson?
Mark: Living in Virginia Beach, VA for 19 years. Having to go to school and work with his minions of all ages. It takes a toll on you and in all honesty it's truly heartbreaking and frustrating to see the affects of this, none of which are all that positive or uplifting as history has often shown. These people are no victims by any means—they made their fucking beds—but it's still tragic in a way to see fellow human beings transformed into hateful, catastrophically headstrong tools. Other prominent hatemonger televangelists have bit the dust in the past few years, oh well. Even if he is next, it still won't take away all the pain. It's a shame, really.

MRR: Having grown up around these evangelical Christians, what are your thoughts about Christianity rearing its ugly head in punk?
Mark: Growing up, there were a few times where "punks" would come to shows, trying to fake the funk, you know, dressing the part and all that. They'd get all friendly, get to know you, and then they'd bring out the big guns. That's when they'd bust out the "abortion is murder" flyers and all that stuff. As if I wasn't bombarded with that enough, it did (and always will) come off as invasive, deceptive, and overall just tricky. I don't care what people do with their time, I've got other things on my mind, just don't bother or harm me with it. I'm not a cop, I'm not gonna be the thought police (like they have been known to be) and tell them what to do. But if they honestly think

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ACCEPTABLE DEATH LOSS

The Story of Reality

By Lance Hahn

Depending on your outlook on the world, "reality" could be the most cynical or most coarse name possible for a peace band. It's often used as a response to the rhetorical question of why the world is so fucked up: that's just reality. In the post-modern world, reality itself is meaningless or meaningful, entirely subjective to the individual.

In terms of anarchist politics, there is the classic tradition of realism, or the idea that there is a set reality (that can be translated into a value system) that exists beyond individuals and individual perceptions. On the other hand, there are the anti-realists that range from Robert Anton Wilson and others who question any reality outside of an individual's consciousness to cultural relativism believing that a person's culture and cultural experience entirely dictates the individual's value system or reality. Both sides would probably call themselves happily idealistic.

Of course, this is getting far off subject. Reality was a punk band that surely took their name from that first, cynical meaning. It was the nature of punk or at least punk as it mutated over a short period of time and space.

Steve Harnett, a.k.a. Hedley "Veng" Harnett, guitarist and vocalist: "It just happened! Punk rock was the most exciting thing to happen in a long time in the rural backwater of England. Energy-driven music and one big challenge to complacency."

Despite a lack of gear, funds and experience, the group pulled together while still in school.

Steve: "The original key members went to school together. Me, Dick and Gullet and Neut. To front us, we recruited a punkette with attitude, Louise, from the nearest sizeable town with a punk scene."

Starting in 1981, the group started life under the arguably less evocative name Alternative Imbecile.

Steve: "Alternative Imbecile was the original Reality line-up prior to recruiting Louise and starting gigging."

Joined by Louise on vocals, the group took on a more directly political edge. The group changed their name to Reality for such reasons despite rumors of some relationship with Chron Gen.

Steve: "Although we were familiar with the Chron Gen song "Reality," for us the name was really an expression of the harder political edge to the band rather than being directly connected to CD. Unemployment, war, etc. was what we intended to sing about."

The band's gigging in 1981 and 1982 probably peaked with an opening spot for Chelsea in King's Lynn and support of Flux of Pink Indians in Norwich.

Steve: "The early gigs were chaotic affairs using borrowed amps and often plugged in a row to make enough wattage. The local scene was based largely around pubs, small clubs, and youth clubs. But we got to play bigger gigs at the nearest cities like Norwich, Cambridge, and Peterborough."

While becoming Reality and adding songs like "NATO," the group had something of an identity as a political band, but they didn't come out of a specifically anarcho scene.

Steve: "The anarcho scene was really just the more political part of the general punk scene where we were. Everybody loved Flux and Crass, etc. But they still liked the easier-going bands like Peter and the Test Tube Babies as well."

Despite this, Reality felt connected to some of the bigger bands of the era.

Steve: "Flux, Subhumans, Conflict, Destructors; we played with Flux at a benefit gig in Norwich and got on well with them. We even used to do a cover version in the early days of their earliest single which no one ever seemed to have heard of. It was called 'The 1970s Have Been Made in Hong Kong.'"

A greatly underrated document of this line-up was the *Blind to the Truth* 7" EP, self-released by the band. Having barely been together for a year, the group bypassed the demo stage and committed three songs to vinyl.

Steve: "*Blind to the Truth* was our first trip into the studio."

Raw punk with coarse but somehow catchy male and female vocals, the record is in some ways a precursor to what Potential Threat would be doing a few years later. Not exactly a hardcore group, this particularly British punk sound had more in common with UK Subs or early Flux than with the faster, Discharge-influenced thrash that was becoming a main influence for a lot of anarcho hardcore groups.

There's also a great energy to the record that might have something to do with the band's naiveté, tearing through the material. "Death of Morality" starts with a crash of drums a la "Blind Justice," sounding like they're about to teeter off of the riser.

Steve: "It's pretty rough but we liked it at the time. We were young and we got ourselves taken more seriously—got gigs, etc.—which we might not have gotten otherwise."

The cover art strangely manages to represent something intangible about those times, and all three tracks do the same audio-wise.

Steve: "'Acceptable Death Loss,' the middle eight—I still think that's a great chord sequence."

Still, for the most part unknown while recording the EP, the group decided to release it on their own with some help from a friend.

Steve: "We released it ourselves with some money lent by a friend who'd gotten an industrial injury payout. No record company would have touched us at that stage."

With the release of the record in 1982, Louise had enough and decided to retire from music altogether.

Steve: "Louise lost interest after a while. I don't think she ever sang for another band."

Neut also left at this time and was replaced

on bass by Sam. Resurfacing as a trio, the group continued playing older material like "Army Controlled State" though even by an October 1982 show in King's Lynn the group sounded better with much more interesting guitar arrangements. Another track from the same gig, "Lost Identities," is almost reminiscent of the Subhumans' "Society."

One of the benefits of the new line-up was that the group was able to hit the road supporting UK Subs, Subhumans, Toy Dolls, Conflict, and Destructors.

Steve: "We didn't really tour properly until about a year later when Louise had left the band. Then we started playing all over the country and not just the local towns and regional cities."

By the following July, the trio recorded a three track demo featuring "Ballad of Mad Harry," "Smiler's Dead," and a new version of "Acceptable Death Loss." Inadvertently, the political punk has some musical connections to what TSOL were doing on their first couple of records stateside. "Smiler's Dead" is an especially catchy track, the grim content about skinhead violence notwithstanding.

Despite this solid line-up, Sam was given the boot in 1983 due to some sort of conflict with other band members. Replaced by Pete, Reality's third bass player, the group was ready for their second record.

More political in life than in lyric, the group by now was more and more involved in anarcho causes.

Steve: "We were going on all the anti-war, anti-cruise missile demos at the time, and most of us had become vegetarian."

The previous two years gigging helped them sort out a deal for their second 7".

Steve: "Mortarhate was Conflict's label and they offered to put us out after we had gigged with them."

What would be their final record is probably their most memorable. *Who Killed the Golden Goose?* is upbeat, melodic punk about greed and cynicism. In some ways, it's the other side of the story to "Do They Owe Us a Living?"

Steve: "It was about people who loved money and then fell on hard times. Kind of like a modern parable! It was one of a couple of songs where the lyrics were written by friends; kind of democratizing the band, letting other people who weren't in bands get a look in. Another example was later on we always let one particular friend come on stage and sing "Acceptable Death Loss" as part of our encore. He loved it."

Two tracks recorded at Elephant in Wapping, the record is a major leap forward from their previous studio efforts. Not only is the overall sound much more polished, playing live for a few years really helped with the band's chops, at times comparable to Newtown Neurotics.

Steve: "Elephant was a proper studio and we were a lot more proficient by then. We had the Lurkers' producer behind the desk by chance and that weekend we really were in top form."

Even today, the songs sound bright and catchy albeit with almost a hint of '80s overproduction.

Steve: "We liked that record and I think it's weathered the years. Maybe both songs could have been shorter. But it's too late now!"

By this point, 1984, anarcho labels were getting more and more productive and while the Reality single sold through its pressing, gone were the days when a 7" would be sure to sell 20,000 copies. The band didn't have much of a relationship with Mortarhate.

Steve: "We had nothing to do with them. Just sent them the tape and eventually it came out in the shops."

In a strange turn of events, as is often the case with a lot of punk bands, the group added a ripper of a lead guitarist. For the most part, new guitarist Jon refrained from wanking,

instead adding a lot of surprisingly tasteful and catchy guitar parts on new songs like "Sign of the Times."

The band would continue to play all the way up until 1985 without releasing any more vinyl.

Steve: "We very nearly recorded an album in the final (post-John Waugh) line-up. We had some good new material but for one reason or another it never happened."

The last release from the group was a 1984 demo featuring "Sign of the Times" and a newer version of "Ballad of Mad Harry."

Steve: "These songs would have gone on the album if it had ever been recorded."

After four years of struggle, it seemed like the band had run its course.

Steve: "The scene was dying away at that point and the gigs became harder to arrange. I think some of the band had other things they wanted to get into as well."

Beyond practicalities, it seemed that the band had burnt through their wick.

Steve: "It was real live energy and action while it lasted."

For a band with such an unsuspectingly complex name, that might have been just enough.

Steve: "The anarcho scene was great and it politicized the whole movement. So it went beyond just being a general challenge to the cultural status quo to a vehicle for real political protest. I don't think we ever win those battles but we must keep on fighting them!"

SEASICK

Seasick is a hardcore punk band from New Brunswick, NJ that melds old and new styles of hardcore into something completely their own. They pack a socially relevant punch that is filtered through the human element and are backed by dead-stop breakdowns as well as neck-breaking riffs. That being stated, they simply shred! To date they have released a split 7" with Don't Wake Up, a 10" record entitled Awakenings, another split 7" with ANS (from TX), and are very close to releasing a one-sided 12" EP.
This interview was conducted via email by craigFUyong.

MRR: Seasick is a great name for a band-how did you come up with that?
Mark: When I joined the band, they already had the name and I was never really certain where it came from. I always just assumed it was chosen because it's one word and it makes you think about puke.
Matt: I also think it is a great band name, but what most people don't know is that it wasn't the first name for the band. We had a slew of fantastic names that were destined to never see the light of day. Some of my favorites include: The Daisy Street Players, Sunset Memories, Shelter, and a personal favorite, Daddy, No!
Nick: I couldn't, for the life of me, think of a name that adequately captured what we wanted the band to be about. So instead of choosing a name on a criterion of, say, political significance, we just chose what we thought sounded cool. Our friend Sara likes to think her screen-name had something to do with it, but our friend Sara also likes to drink Mountain Dew and gin on the regular.

MRR: How long have you guys been playing together and how did the band get started?
Nick: I have a terrible memory. All I remember is asking Matt if he wanted to play in a band.
Matt: Nick and I started playing together in January of 2005, and we picked up Mark on drums at the end of that summer. Since then, it has been an uphill battle to find our own niche. Mark and I are still trying out new sounds, and following the release of *Ouroboros* we will be releasing a disco record entitled *Seasick: Let's Get Busy*. The record will be entirely sung in German through a voicing program on my computer. Nick has already refused to be on the record, and this is the first he's hearing of it.
Mark: The first demo came out in late '05, but we didn't become a fully functional band until '06, playing almost all of our early shows at 120 Hamilton in New Brunswick and the Think Tank house at the shore.
MRR: Your lyrical content is extremely well written; who writes the lyrics?
Nick: I do. It's a painstaking process more

You'd be surprised how many people still get offended by swear words. I mean, come on, it's the '90s!

akin to writing an annoyingly difficult essay rather than the artistic outlet it probably should be, and that I imagine most other lyricists view it as.

Mark: We all read and talk about the lyrics before they are considered "final." Usually it all works out...well, sometimes there's a small debate and other times we can be cruel and honest and we have to tell Nick that it just isn't any good and he can do better. Which is OK, because criticism is all a part of the process, and we hold the music to the same standards.

Matt: Thank you. I generally write them piecing them together from old issues of *Cracked* magazine, using a type of cut and paste approach. But I generally get my inspiration from old *Highlights for Kids* publications, mostly looking at classic *Goofus and Gallant* strips. There is a lot to be learned from those two children.

MRR: What is the song-writing process like with you guys? Is any one person responsible for writing the music or do you write songs collectively as a band?

Mark: The music is handled mostly by Matt, Gore, and me. The writing for our next record was mostly put together in writing sessions that Matt and I would schedule at our house late at night after work. We got into a pretty good rhythm of bouncing riffs off of each other and maybe having a few beers. Other times I might have an idea and we hash it out at practice, holding all parts to the same critical scrutiny as the lyrics.

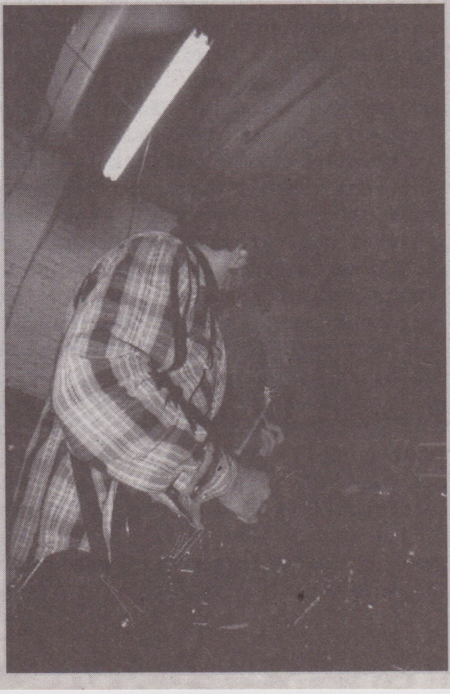
Matt: Generally, we go into the studio and just press record. What you hear is the end result. Seasick has been able to transcend the writing process and simply improvise in the studio. We find writing to be an extension of the oppression that exists in everyday society. Why should we have to conform to restraints like song structure, which only hold us in the societal shackles that keep the fat cats on top? Those motherfuckers think they are better than me, and we're here to say, "You're probably right."

Nick: Matt is out of his mind.

MRR: Do you have any specific political standpoint or school of thought you try to promote in your music?

Nick: One prominent theme is that egoism, whether it be psychological, ethical, or rational, is false. The idea that humans are only capable of responding to self-interested reasons is wrong. The idea that acting out of self-interest is both necessary and sufficient for acting ethically or rationally is a mistake. These are the principles by which capitalist societies have been organized for hundreds of years and it is these principles that are crucially responsible for the sick state of the world. Burn your copies of the *Leviathan* and tell Ayn Rand to go fuck herself.

Mark: We have put out a few records so far and there are definitely some themes that have remained fairly consistent throughout. Recently, we have been trying to convey that no matter what choice you make, your choice is going to convey certain political ramifications, whether it's your choice to remain apathetic or conscience. "Whether you're fuckin' or playin' golf." For example, if you buy and wear the new Air Force Ones, you are conveying a political idea; whether it be modern hyper-consumerism, disregard for human life, or Western privilege. Basically, even if you try to be "apolitical," you are not, because even choices that are small like buyin' shoes can mean a fuck of a lot. I don't think anyone in Seasick has ever thought that anyone can be, or is, perfect, nor do we think that we are better than people because of the clothes they wear or something dumb like that, but we are living in fucked-up times and you gotta know what's going on in the world around you. The ideas we have advocated in our music-anarchism, animal rights, feminism, atheism, etc.-are all linked by the common thread that people and life in general deserve to be treated decently and we don't have to cut each others' throats and create all of these stupid categories to hate each other in the ways which capitalism inevitably leads us to feel.



MRR: You guys live in a house with an attached "garage" venue space called Fuck Mountain that regularly does shows in New Brunswick. How has that been working out? Do you find putting on shows a rewarding or tedious task?

Matt: The shows are always a really, really good time. Great people end up coming with a lot of other really great people. Towards the beginning, we caught some resistance due to the name of our house. (You'd be surprised how many people still get offended by swear words. I mean, come on, it's the '90s!) But, those who come tend to have a good time. I can say some of the best shows I have been to or played have been in my backyard.

Mark: For me, it's been a rewarding experience, although doing shows of course has its highs and lows. It's really important that there is a release for people; like I said before, there is so much fucked-up shit in this world, sometimes it can be really overbearing and you really just need to have a good time. I also really enjoy meeting new people who are on the road. Helping out bands who are on tour is really important to us. We know what it's like to be on the road and broke and tired and blah blah blah, so we try to treat bands the way that we would like to be treated-promoting the show, collecting money at the door for the bands, giving them a place to stay (usually our apartment), showing them around town, cooking food, and just generally trying to make their time in New Brunswick a positive experience.

Nick: It's been fine. I wish the space was a bit bigger, but whatever. We learned a lot from doing shows at 120 Hamilton the past few

years, so shows here have been mostly worry-free.

MRR: How do you view the current scene in New Jersey?

Mark: I think it's fucking awesome. There are so many awesome bands and totally cool people around. I'm really psyched on everything everyone has been doing. Actually, last night I was at the bar and my friend Big A and I were talking and he said something to the effect of "what other place in the country has all of the music and bands we do? New Brunswick is the best place to be right now for music." I thought about it and it just might be true (in my narrow scope)-there are a ton of incredible bands and pretty much everyone knows everyone. It's cool as hell. I'm sure I sound like some kind of hype machine right now, but it's really hard to not be excited about what's going on. In the greater New Brunsiwck area, there's Killin It!, The Ergs!, Hunchback, Zhenia Golov, The Measure (SA), Screaming Females, Dead Tired, Full of Fancy, Staring Problem, Static Radio, Sea Creature, The Degenerics, Tin Kitchen, In First Person, RSO, Fanshen, and loads and loads of other bands I'm probably forgetting right now. There are also new zines like *Hub City Out of the Basement* and *What's a Zine?* springing up. Good times, good times.

Matt: At times it can be very separated, and at other times it feels like a very connected community. The latter comes from the influx of truly great bands in the area right now. Between the shore and New Brunswick there is ultimately something for everyone on every show these days. It's just a shame that we get put on these shows and ruin the audience's good time.

Nick: I think my view is somewhat distorted. Being in a very active band seems to narrow one's perspective a bit. Since we play almost every weekend, I only get to see through the "lens of Seasick," as it were. But from this perspective, I can safely say that New Brunswick is one of the best places in the country for punk right now.

MRR: How do you view the current punk rock scene in general? It has gained such popularity in the past few years and has become quite accessible via the internet and such-do you feel that radio-friendly "punk" bands and things like the internet recruit more true hardcore kids or does it send DIY punk even further underground? For example, a kid starts out with Green Day, which trickles down into finding hardcore punk online, starting to buy old and new vinyl records, and going to shows...

Matt: I mean, the kid you described was pretty much me when I first got into punk. I got some Green Day and Nirvana CDs and eventually just researched their influences. It was probably the same in the early '80s when a kid would see the Ramones on *Sha-na-na* or something. But, to answer the question more directly, I think most kids probably check it out on the internet, and realize that the music sucks and learn to stay away. It acts most as a deterrent than anything else.

Mark: I think punk rock is just like most other musical genres in many respects. You hear something like Green Day on the radio and it sounds interesting to you, so you dig deeper and you find some real shit. It's just the same if you were listening to an old big-band jazz radio station and heard Benny Goodman, then you got into jazz and ended up with something like Dave Fiuczynski's *Kif*. What strikes me as different about punk rock is not the music per se but the ethics of the DIY movement that surrounds it. You could get into almost any band via the internet or radio, but understanding how to interact with people in a communal aspect (a.k.a. shows) is something you can't get from downloading things off the web. I think that is a big reason why some kids act in the negative way that they do at bigger shows. They see on TV some heavy chug-mosh on a big money "independent" "hardcore" label fronting as legit and think that punching people for no reason is "hardcore," or that calling people homophobic names is both cool and justifying how "hard" they are. I guess what I'm trying to get at is you can get into punk and hardcore music in a lot of different ways, but watching television and downloading songs isn't going

to teach us anything about interacting with each other, and no matter how you splice it that's what hardcore is about.
Nick: I'm only 23, so I don't really have a frame of reference. I wasn't around before punk was popular or before the internet was pervasive. If someone is into DIY punk now, that's all that really matters. I don't give a shit how they got here.
MRR: If you collectively or individually could magically change *one* thing about the current punk scene, what would it be?
Matt: Give people better attitudes, or at the very least, some hover bikes.
Nick: There's too many aspects I'd like to see changed, so I'll pick two. First, a lot of punks are strangely conservative. Don't look at me like I'm the crazy one for thinking capitalism is a bad idea. I'd expect that much at my job, but not at a show. Secondly, let's broaden the scope of this retro resurgence. LA wasn't the only punk scene in the '80s.
Mark: Hmmm, magic eh? I guess I would have all shows happen on magic carpet rides.

MRR: Explain the new record—is there a specific concept?
Matt: There is. Imagine the concept for The Beatles' *White Album*. Sounds good, right?
Mark: We try to be fairly thorough and conceptualized with each recording that we do. Not to say that this is a "concept record" a la Yes, but there are a lot of themes that are tied together and small things to keep the record focused. I guess Nick would be the best one to answer the lyric-oriented aspect of this question, but as for the music we are trying to keep it tight and fast with lots of changes while keeping an emphasis on the rhythm of each track, because music like this is supposed to groove no matter how fast you are playing. With each recording we try to improve, evolve, and out-do the last, and this is no different, because to me, it's boring and lame to make the same record over and over. Unless you are the Ramones, of course, because that shit was tight.
Nick: A central theme throughout the new album is self-defeat, which is partly why we decided to call the album *Ouroboros*. An ouroboros is a symbol of a snake eating itself. It's been used since antiquity as a symbol to represent infinity. In our interpretation, it symbolizes the self-defeating and cyclical nature of choices. I like to think of it as symbolizing the unsustainable principles, policies, and procedures around which 21st century capitalist societies organize themselves.

...No matter what choice you make, your choice is going to convey certain political ramifications... Whether you're fuckin' or playin' golf...if you buy and wear the new Air Force Ones, you are conveying a political idea

MRR: Touring plans?
Matt: A journey to the center of the mind sometime this winter. Followed by more recording and touring wherever people will have us.
Mark: We are going on our second full US tour this summer for about 40 days with our friends Zhenia Golov from New Brunswick and ANS from Texas, possibly hitting a few spots in Mexico as well. Next year we will be doing a shorter tour in the winter in order to give us more time to take off of work and school to record our first full-length. But then, next summer we plan on hitting the full US, Canada and Mexico as well as flying out to Europe for the first time to tour out there.

MRR: How has touring been in the past?
Nick: A lot of bands I talk to have incredible tour stories. Every other band seems to end up in these ridiculous situations where they have to run from the cops, fight a crackhead, or whatever. None of this happens to us. I've had more excitement sitting in my room than on some of our tours. The craziest tour experience we may have had was crashing our van, and that was terrible. Actually, when Gore funneled from a month-old keg about six times, I'd say that was pretty gnarly.
Matt: It would have been great had I been doing it with a halfway decent band. But at least the people we have met have been a lot nicer to me then my band is.
Mark: This summer will be our fifth tour, and obviously we wouldn't still be doing it if we didn't love being on the road. We have lost lots of money on past tours (coming back even more broke, van troubles, etc.), been in a van crash where we thought we would go the way of Cliff Burton, and we've seen lots of sketchy, sketchy things, but honestly every tour has been a positive experience in my opinion and is always the best time. When tour is over I always find myself wishing it could continue, and then just waiting and waiting for the next tour to begin.

MRR: How do you feel audiences react to the political side of your music? Do you receive feedback often?
Matt: Like any other band, those who like it are vocal about it to us. Others will just ignore them.
Nick: Most reactions are typical. We're known as a political band, but I don't think anyone actually knows what are politics really are. I don't think many people are reading the lyrics. People's familiarity with our politics only goes so far. For instance, I think when someone reads the lyrics to, say, "Horizon," they conclude the song is simply a women's rights song. But I wouldn't write just a song about women's rights, because that's not a very interesting take on the topic. The song is essentially about expanding our notion of equality beyond our standard capitalist conception. Women won't be equal when they earn the same amount as men. Equality isn't just about wages, it's about respect. Most songs contain several strains of thought, and it's frustrating how often they're reduced to mere slogans.
Mark: When people come up to us at shows and bring up our politics or ask us about the books we bring with us on tour (from the NJ Infoshop), it's usually overwhelmingly positive. In some spots we have kids telling us that it's awesome that we bring books to shows because they have never seen that before and they never hear bands

with anything to say, which is strange because I remember when punk and hardcore shows had literature and record distros all over the place and bands would actually have a message and not just sell t-shirts and hope the kids are moshin'. Of course, when you have a message like we, do it's bound to make some people feel uncomfortable, but I feel like there's a lot of bullshit people should be thinking about, so fuck it (read: up the punx).

MRR: What is the last album you each listened to? Each of you, go!
Matt: The Velvet Underground, and it continues to blow my mind every time I listen to it. Expect the full-length to sound somewhere in between this record and Weird Al Yankovic's *Dare to be Stupid* LP.
Nick: *Rock for Light* and *You'll Always Be Sick* by Staring Problem. I think the Killin' It and Zhenia Golov 7"s were thrown in there too.
Mark: While answering these questions, I listened to Down in Flames *Start the Fucking Fire* EP more than once.

MRR: What was the last movie each of you has seen that really moved you?
Matt: I'm really going to try and not get too geeky for the next two questions, so please bear with me. I just watched Wong Kar Wai's *Chungking Express*. I'm all about movies that celebrate movies, and this one does so in a way that is both incredibly simple, yet endlessly fascinating. It's a film that celebrates classic Hollywood cinema while continuing to question its conventions. Wong does this much in the same way that a filmmaker like Goddard or more contemporarily the Coen brothers would do. I could go on and on about this movie, but I will save the reader the torture.
Nick: Danny Boyle's most recent film *Sunshine* is the only movie I've really cared about in the past six months. I don't tend to watch movies more than once, but I think I watched *Sunshine* about six times so far.
Mark: Metallica *Some Kind of Monster*. So touching.

MRR: And finally, what is the last book you've read?
Nick: *A Virtue Epistemology* by Ernest Sosa.
Matt: I recently read Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*-the inspiration for Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*. It is just as awesome, for different reasons, because we get to see Deckard really struggling with moral ambiguity of what his job is. Ultimately, the book questions whether if the murder of a non-human is justifiable, while framing this question with synthetic humans and making animals these kind of religious idols. The whole thing is told within the narrative structure of a really cool detective novel. It's like you're having fun, while learning! What a country!
Mark: Off and on I had been reading a book about the works of French post modern philosopher Jean Baudrillard, but eventually I found a point where I no longer found his logic to be compelling or convincing.

MRR: OK, that covers all of your personal media interests... So what message would Seasick like to send out to the world of zine readers?
Matt: A flute with no holes is not a flute. A donut with no hole is a Danish.
Nick: Every rumor you've heard about us is true, especially if it involves shit talking. My shit talking skills are insane. I can talk shit in a room that I'm not even standing in. Impressed?
Mark: d0nt b h8n.

MRR: So how would one get in touch with Seasick?
Mark: In an ironic turn, we have been doing much of our correspondence through our MySpace page, but we can be emailed: nicholaslaskowski@gmail.com
Nick: The irony Mark is hinting at is that MySpace is owned by the fucked-up company NewsCorp, which is a monopolistic media outlet that contributes millions to right-wing think tanks. We should probably finally get around to deleting our account.

MRR: Closing comments?
Mark: On this tour we will also have a new split with Killin It!, which is going to be recorded live at the last show at Fuck Mountain. The split will be on tape only.
Nick: Pick up a copy of the *Hub City Hardcore* compilation from Soul Rebel Records. DT.
Matt: I've enjoyed the ten minutes, which I have now stolen from you, the reader. Thank you. Oh, and word up to Gore...RIP.

MRR: Thanx guys, it been a pleasure!

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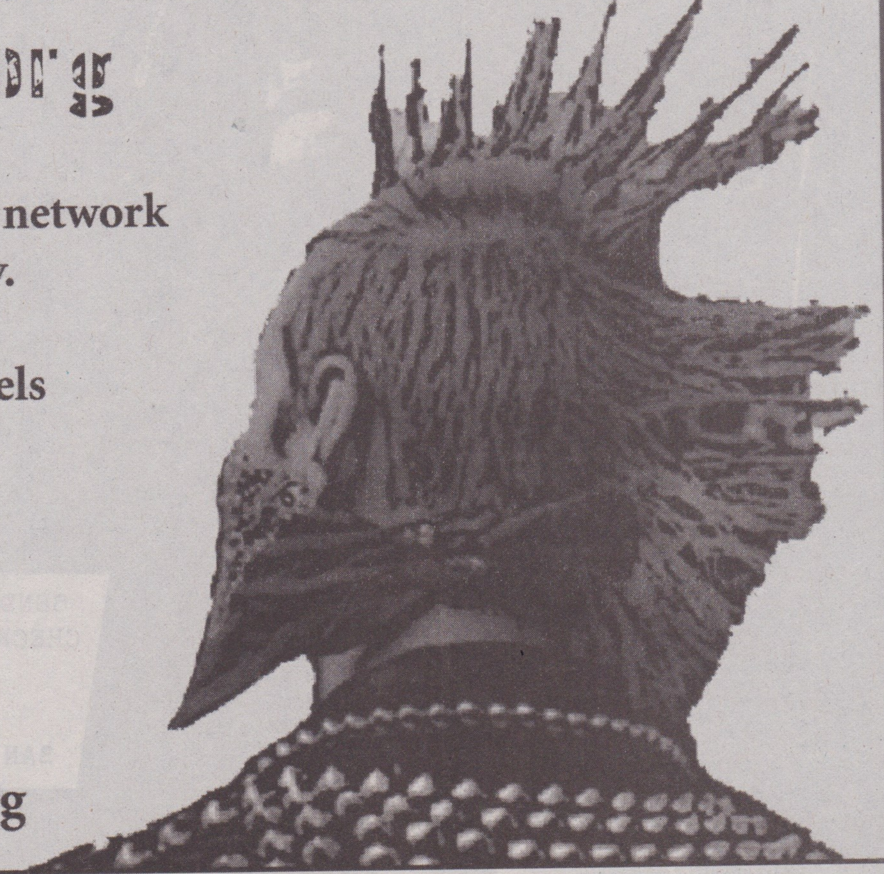

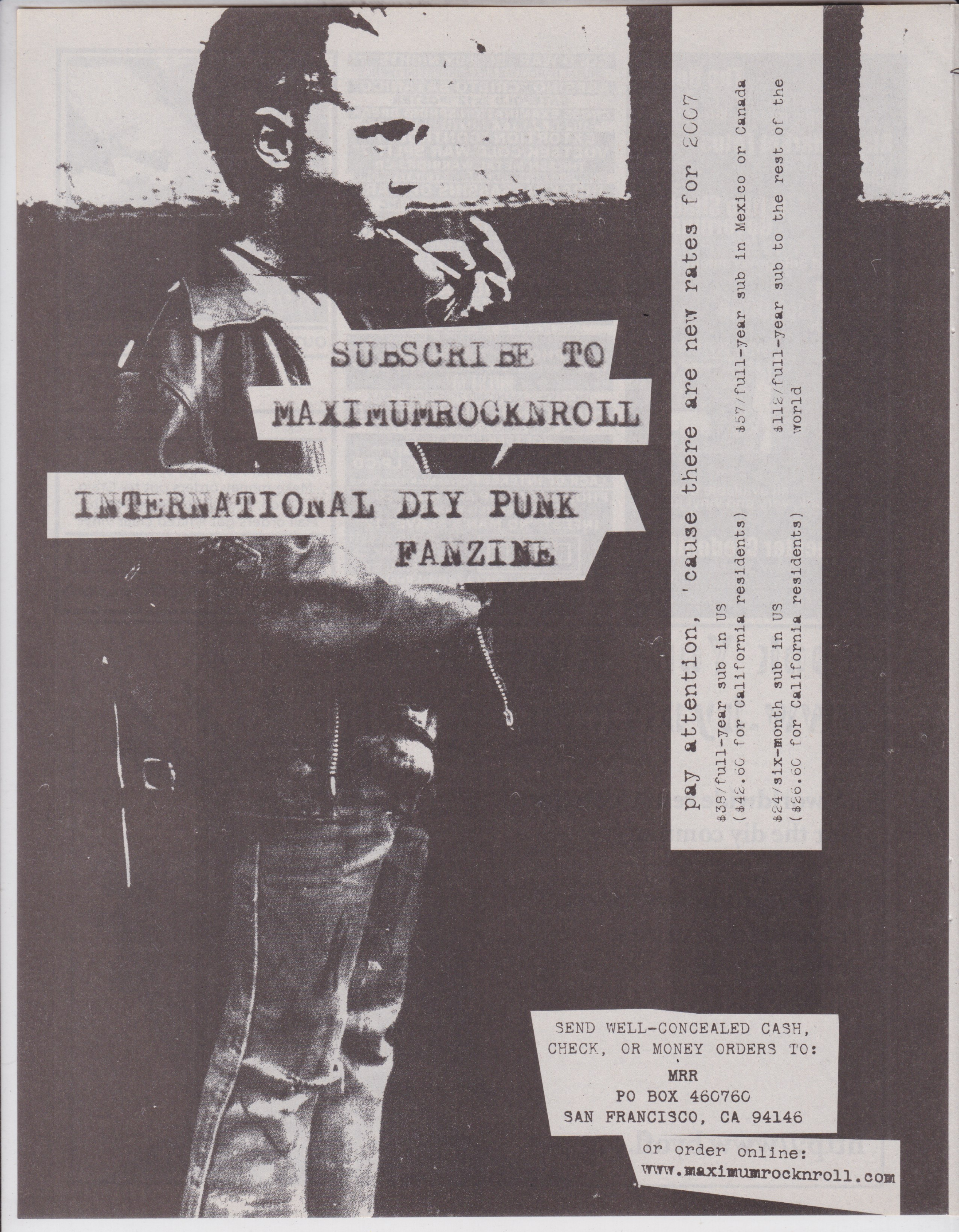
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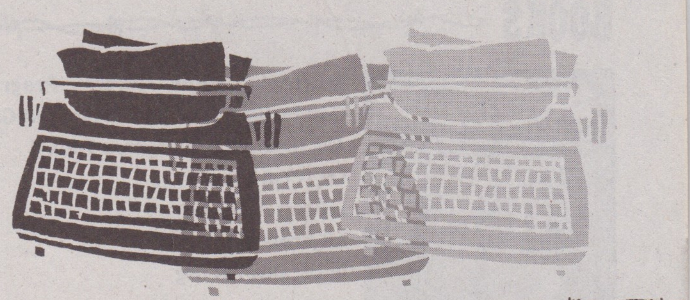
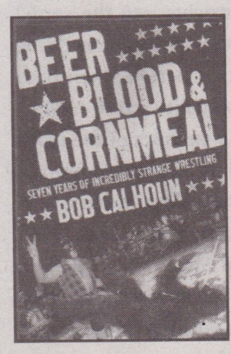




Beer, Blood & Cornmeal: Seven Years Of Incredibly Strange Wrestling
Bob Calhoun
366 pages • $19.95
ECW Press
www.ecwpress.com

Incredibly Strange Wrestling was a truly San Franciscan phenomenon, where Mexican-styled "wrestlers" grappled with each other under absurd pretenses and conditions. The Abortionist fought Cletus The Fetus while El Homo Loco waited to go up (and rub up) against hairy, short-shorted The Cruiser. Ku Klux Klown, and partner Harley Racist duked it out with the Yom Ripper tag team, shortly after El Pollo Diablo took down Macho Sasquacho (both characters appearing in full, head-to-toe high school mascot-style costumes). It all went down in a venue buzzing with an endless supply of flying corn tortillas supplied by the promoters. The events were, excuse the term, no-holds-barred parties that left viewers feeling exhilarated and offended and usually in need of a change of clothes.

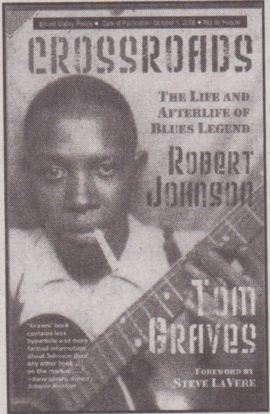
Bob Calhoun (aka Count Dante, aka Uncle NAMBLA, aka Dante The Baptist, etc.) worked his way up from a floundering wrestler wannabe to the pinnacled (though unofficial) position of ring announcer and concept developer. His ideas about characters and their stories helped make ISW what it was—namely, an entertaining amalgam of wrestling, punk rock, and horrendous violations against common decency and taste.

"When right wing radio shitbags like Rush Limbaugh proclaim that San Francisco 'isn't part of America,' you know they're right. Thousands of gays, weirdos and activist types move their asses to San Francisco every year because it isn't part of America." ISW came about in a time when independent music and culture were both tantamount and under threat in San Francisco. It was a perfect breeding ground for ISW and its unusual cast, and the shows they put on grew and grew, despite the supreme lack of real wrestling talent on staff. But as the social and economic standards in SF shifted, so did Calhoun's life and lifestyle. It is a similar story for some many people. There is a subtext to this book, which advocates SF and its alternative nature and history to be maintained and not forgotten. It is also a cautionary tale for cities on the brink of a boom of their own.

In telling his story of this era, Calhoun shamelessly reveals his dorkiness. He contemplates Baron Karza's chances in a fight against Boba Fett. He repeatedly makes fun of bass players in a way that proves he is one ("Basses that looked like your grandma's over lacquered coffee table... were only suitable for backing Yanni at the Acropolis during...PBS pledge drives."). In his 30s he quits Incredibly Strange Wrestling and moves back home with his mom and pens a biography about Gene LaBell...a former (you guessed it) wrestler.

This book was like candy—I could not stop eating it up; maybe because I knew half the people/bands mentioned, or maybe because I was party to the dotcom-cum-bomb era of San Francisco, 1995-2003 when all this takes place, or maybe because I am a sucker for road tales involving unreal characters willing to do unbelievable things? Or maybe just because this is a great read.

—Craigums



Crossroads: The Life and Afterlife of Robert Johnson
Tom Graves
114 pages • $14.95
Demers Books LLC
www.DemersBooks.com

Crossroads, a book written by Tom Graves, is a list of many facts concerning Robert Johnson's life and death that you are more than likely to come across for many years ahead. A major part of this book also handles Johnson's amazing afterlife, in which his place in the world of major recording artists in the 20th century has grown from being known as the "king of the delta blues singers" to being one of the few desperate artists in the history of music. Tom Graves covers it all, from Robert's first time on long-play records to a time when hardly anything was known about Johnson, including the unearthing of the very few photographs of him. The interest in him only grew greater after these discoveries, as did the goal to find the person who would inherit these things and the small fortune that had grown from the sale of the rights of Robert Johnson's music. This is a book about the life and afterlife of the blues legend Robert Johnson. In the beginning the author gives a detailed description of the blues legend's life starting at birth and ending with the afterlife of Robert Johnson.

At about 120 pages of text and pictures you get a clear picture of what life was like, not only for Robert Johnson but for many blues artists in the 20th century, especially as black blues musicians. In that time period if you were a black man you did not have many choices concerning your occupation, and many of the blues artists came from the South where the main industry was cotton fields. Like many other,s Robert Johnson knew he could make more money in two days playing on street corners and juke joints than working in the cotton fields. Robert Johnson left home in his teen years and began playing said corners and juke joints. He had fallen in love with a young woman at the age of 19, and married her. She then got pregnant and died at birth along with the child. This is what many have speculated was the beginning of the end for the blues musician. After the death of his wife and unborn child Johnson went from town-to-town playing shows, drinking heavily, and never being with a women for more than a couple of days. Johnson continued this way of life until his death, which some say is uncertain, but most state it was sometime in 1937. He is thought to have died from alcohol poisoning, and rumor has it that the person who poisoned him was a jealous husband of a woman Johnson had slept with. Doctor's today say it's hard to tell what he died from but the most probable cause was alcohol poisoning.

If you are at all interested in the life of Robert Johnson I would highly recommend picking up this book. Many interesting things are discussed, not only with Johnson's life, but with many other blues musicians as well. Life as a blues musician was wild and unpredictable, and that is what makes the blues are "the blues."

—Caleb Lash

BOOKS

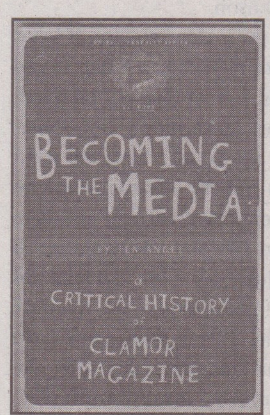
Nowtopia: How Pirate Programmers, Outlaw Bicyclists, and Vacant-Lot Gardeners Are Inventing the Future Today!
Chris Carlsson
278 pgs • $18.95
AK Press
www.akpress.org

Nowtopia, while being a totally whack term that I hope I never hear in real life, is a fairly decent book. Mainly focusing on the *hippier* side of community activism, Carlsson writes about community gardens, bike collectives, pirate radio stations, and burning man. Burning man? Yeah, you heard me. But let's pretend you didn't.

Anyway, like a lot of books of this ilk, it's hard to tell who the intended audience is. Punx like you and I probably already know a lot about these sorts of activities and might get bored reading some simplified versions of theory; but my mom and other academics/middle-aged liberals might not get enough information to really understand the stuff going on. I know it's appealing to assume that you can make a book that will be accessible to people in different communities, but I think *Nowtopia* would be way more enjoyable if it was either for activists, or for people who don't really know much and need a good introduction. I mean, I don't want to be told about why community gardens might be a good idea. I would rather read some in-depth discussion about how they can be successful, but somebody else might have a very different feeling.

A lot of stuff in *Nowtopia* is interesting, but much of it barely skims the surface, so even the most exciting stories didn't get me all that worked up about "nowtopia." I guess it's not a bad book to have in your library, but not necessarily a book you'd turn to for some specifics.

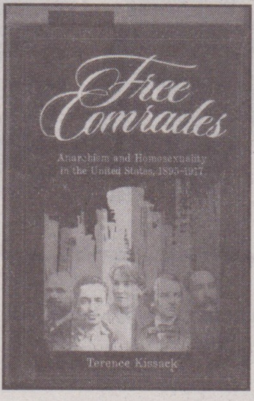
—Thera



Becoming the Media: A Critical History of Clamor Magazine
Jen Angel
43 pages • $5.95
PM Press
PO Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623
www.pmpress.org

I'm impressed with how much information is packed into *Becoming the Media*. Jen has done a great job of chronicling her experience over *Clamor*'s six years. This is one heck of a resource for folks involved in media, community organizing, and really applicable to a wide variety of groups. It's rare to see a nuts and bolts explanation of exactly how projects such as *Clamor* are started, organized, funded, distributed, et cetera. The pamphlet also frankly addresses ways in which these efforts fell short and what she learned from those challenges, and I found that part a particularly useful tool for potential projects. It's obvious that the author learned a great deal from her experience with *Clamor*, and is able to critically discuss that experience, warts and all. Highly recommended, 'nuff said.

—Tress



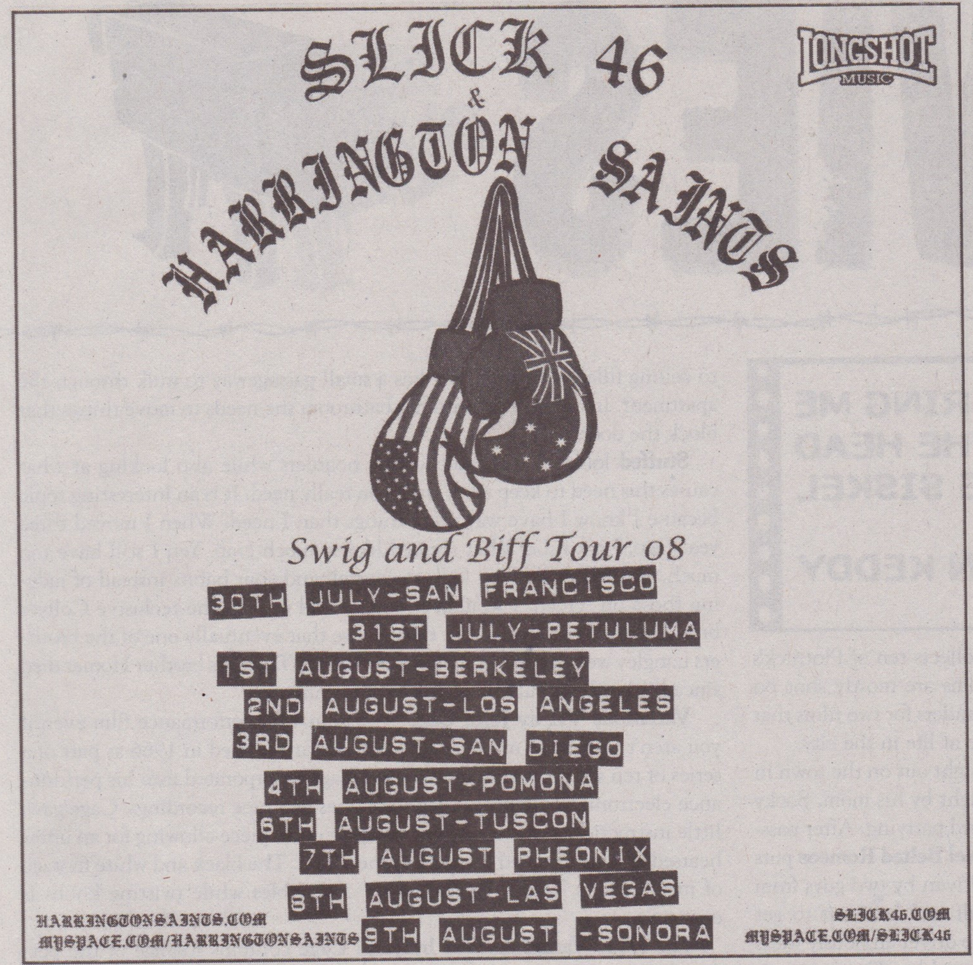
Free Comrades: Anarchism and Homosexuality in the United States, 1895-1917
Terence Kissack
229 pages
AK Press
www.akpress.org

Terrence Kissack's book is a well-researched history offering many insights into the sexual politics among turn-of-the-century anarchists. In all, the book reflects a period when both anarchism and homosexuality were understood in very different ways than they are now. The anarchism of the 1800s was a worldwide movement that was a broad organization actively preparing for imminent revolution and overthrow of the state. With brutal crackdown on political dissent, especially left-leaning, during and after the First World War, anarchism and socialism in the United States receded from prominence. It was only during the '60s, along with the growth of the New Left, that anarchism was revived, but in a different guise than the era of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman. Turn-of-the-century anarchism was part of the broad field of labor and socialist movements that functioned and governed with working class support within the mainstream of politic discourse. However, anarchism of the post-'60s and up-to-today generally has focused around the college-educated middle class creating a counter culture. In contrast, sexual politics at the turn-of-the-century, especially politics regarding homosexual relationships, were only in their infancy. Same-sex sexual relationships, when even discussed, were addressed under a broad range of different labels. Distinctions were made between sexual (taboo) and non-sexual (okay) romantic same-sex relationships and today this divide seems archaic. Anarchists, embracing the early works of sexologists and psychologists, worked to move homosexuality out of the shadows and prisons and into the realm of acceptable non-criminal behavior between consenting adults. Freedom from state regulation equals free love, equals birth control and homosexuality.

Somewhat ironically, gender roles today within the LBGT community, especially within the discussion of the mainstream culture, are much less open than they were at the turn of the century. In naming homosexual relationships it has both empowered homosexuals by giving them an entrance into the political discourse, but it has also limited the expression of homosexuality by codifying it into a set of expectations, parameters, and performances. Furthermore, as homosexuality has moved into the mainstream, it has lost it's much of it's subversive edge and has broken from the early connection to progressive politics. Clearly when the most pressing gay rights issue is the right to marriage, we have moved far from the free love ethos of Emma Goldman's sex radicalism. Anarchists embraced the right for adults to freely participate in same-sex relationships as a rebuttal to state-sanctioned and regulated norms about heterosexual roles, but today LBGT groups fight for the inclusion into those same state regulatory systems of marriage. And we call it *progress*.

Kissack's book does a very good job of laying out this history, with all its nuances, contradictions, and ambiguities. *Free Comrades: Anarchism and Homosexuality in the United States, 1895-1917* is recommended for those interested in the history of anarchism or sexual politics and also recommended for anyone who needs to be reminded, yet again, that Emma Goldman was a righteous, *righteous* woman.

—Ben Howell



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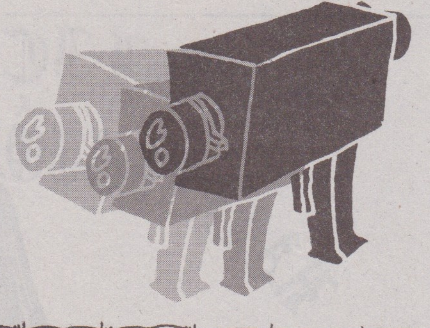
MOVIES



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

Warts & All: The Films of Danny Plotnick collects ten of Plotnick's short films made between 1986 and 2001. The films are mostly shot on 8mm film. The collection amusingly starts off with trailers for two films that appear later on the DVD. Each film is a fun glimpse at life in the city.

I, Socky follows a rebellious sock monkey for a night out on the town in San Francisco. After being tucked in bed for the night by his mom, Socky sneaks off for a night of drinking, peepshows and hard partying. After passing out at a friend's house, Socky stumbles home. **Steel Belted Romeos** puts you in the driver's seat of a car that cuts off a car driven by two guys from Jersey. The boys take it as the worst kind of insult and head off to get revenge. While the cars are stopped at a red light, the driver anxiously waits for the light to turn green while the boys hurl insults at him. The tension is heightened as the Jersey boys suddenly change into clowns. **Pipsqueak Pfollies** follows a regular guy as he tries to get his laundry at the local laundromat. A gang of local preteens torments him. They steal his soap and battle him on the street. **Pillow Talk** is the story of apartment living. The building's thin walls hide nothing from the neighbors bringing one woman to the edge when she can't sleep because of her neighbors' late night sexual and violent activities. She is further annoyed by another neighbor's lack of laundry room etiquette.

Ironically the least appealing of the films is **Swingers' Serenade** the only 16mm film in this collection. It is the most technically proficient as well as one of the longest, at twenty-four minutes. The idea was a good one. Plotnick took a script from a '60s amateur filmmaking magazine and made it. Whether included in the original script or not, the smarmy narrator constantly interrupting to remind the audience what we were watching is beyond annoying. Just as you are getting into the fun of the film he appears again and again.

If you are a true independent filmmaker it really helps to have talented friends who want to act in your films. Fortunately for Poltnick his friends are talented and funny. When a film calls for dressing like a clown, being beat up by a gang of elementary school kids or even wearing a KISS t-shirt from the non-makeup days, Ray Wilcox was there. Anthony Bedard told me that his scene in **I, Socky** came about when the filmmaker showed up unannounced at his door one afternoon. But how could he refuse?

Missing from **Warts & All: The Films of Danny Plotnick** is my favorite Plotnick film, **I'm Not Fascinating – The Movie!** After inquiring around town I was told a special edition DVD of the film is in the works. I can't wait. (ww.dannyplotnick.com)

Stuffed is short film by Arwen Curry (of *MRR*) and Cerissa Tanner about people who hoard. There are three different types of hoarders shown in the film. Betsey has her "stuff" in a storage space. Her house has no clutter because her husband won't allow it. Jim lives in an apartment that is very cluttered, but he is still able to move around and do things around the house such as cook. Judith is the worst of the three. Her apartment is floor to ceiling filled with stuff. She has a small passageway to walk through the apartment. In order to get into her bathroom she needs to move things that block the door.

Stuffed looks at the habits of the hoarders while also looking at what causes this need to keep more than you really need. It is an interesting topic because I know I have way more things than I need. When I moved three years ago, I got rid of what seemed like so much crap. Yet, I still have too much. **Stuffed** makes you look at yourself and your habits instead of judging those on screen. I wouldn't want to end up like the reclusive Collyer brothers who kept so much in their house that eventually one of the brothers Langley was crushed by a pile of it in 1947. Then his brother Homer died since his brother could no longer care for him.

Variations VII by John Cage is a fascinating performance film even if you aren't into noise music or performance art. Filmed in 1966 as part of a series of ten artists' performances John Cage incorporated into his performance electronic appliances, telephone lines and tape recordings. Cage gave little instruction to the other participating in his piece allowing for an unrehearsed and unexpected element in the sound. The black and white footage of men in suits harshly lit leaning of over tables while twisting knobs is engaging.

The DVD **Variations VII by John Cage** contains footage of the performance as well as a documentary explaining who was involved and how things were set up. There is also an audio recording of the full performance. (http://www.microcinema.com)

There is no arguing, the Dead Boys were one of the great punk bands. They recorded a bunch of classic songs in the short years before drugs and whatnot broke them up. Unfortunately, under those circumstances a reunion is usually only seen as a desperate need for money. The band's New York reunion show, **Return of the Living Dead Boys: Halloween Night 1986**, would be easily seen that way if the band didn't sound great. They do, even if they don't look that good. Stiv Bators is wearing a full leather (or is that pleather?) biker's outfit. The rest of the band goes through the motions except for Cheetah Chrome who still rocks out. They are older and perhaps not as wild, but at least Bators gets naked on stage.

Amusingly, there appears to be some sort of tension between Stiv Bators and Cheetah Chrome. Bators introduces Chrome as Uncle Fester and he gives out Chrome's hotel room number as well as the name he is registered under during the show. It seems as if Chrome might punch Bators at one point, but he just walks past him off stage. Bators exits the opposite way.

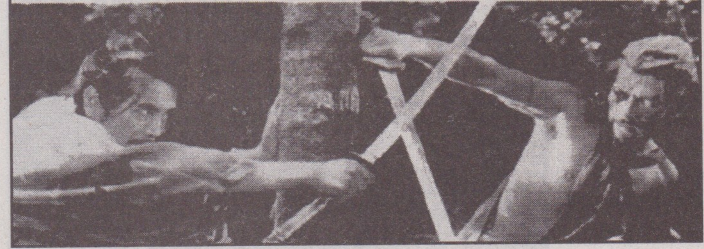
The reason to get the **Return of the Living Dead Boys: Halloween Night 1986** DVD is for the sole extra. It is a 1980 appearance on the TV show *Good Morning Youngstown* by Bators and his post-Dead Boys musical collaborator Frank Secich. The host Gary Cubberly is genuinely amused by Bators referring to him as a sex symbol and mentions that Bators has been on his show a few times before. They show the video for "Sonic Reducer," which is a funny combination of the band performing live with flight simulation video, nazi youth, bombs exploding and money being printed. The only disappointment is that the quality isn't that good. It comes off of a videotape with lost of static. (www.mvdvisual.com)

The Gits Movie is finally being released. It is screening at the Embarcadero Cinema in San Francisco on July 7th and Northwest Film Forum in Seattle starting July 4th, plus many other locations throughout the country and Canada. Check their website www.thegitsmovie.com for all the screenings.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to

Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



ROCK'N'ROLL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

It explains a lot that the co-directors of **Rock'n'Roll Camp for Girls** are unapologetic Sleater-Kinney fans. That's not an encouraging start, but it led to a novel segment of the rock subculture: wanna-be rockers whose only drawback is their age. With girls from 8 to 18, this camp thrives on a spirit of unabashed rockingness, and you won't find a guy anywhere close to the premises. Shane King and Arne Johnson may not be the most gifted or inventive filmmakers, but their rootsy approach may be the perfect complement to the subject.

In case you're wondering, this camp has no relation to Jack Black's **School of Rock**. It's the main project of Girls Rock Institute, an organization that also has sections for older girls and hip-hop fans; they even offer private lessons. The release of *Rock Camp Book* is scheduled to come out about the time you read this, though for curiosity-seekers, this film is probably a better bet. The Institute even has a burgeoning distro, with CDs and EPs by the likes of Shemo, Dolly Ranchers, and Pom Pom Meltdown.

The Institute is proceeding more slowly with expanding their public image. Before getting permission to film, the directors had to assure the staff that they wouldn't transform it into a bizarre version of *Star Search* or *American Idol*—and it would have been too easy. They seem particularly sensitive to the fact their aims might be misunderstood.

One camper, Amelia, has, at the age of eight, developed her own pre-Flipper-esque style to rock. She spends her time at camp practice time strumming random chords on a flower-shaped electric guitar. Even her peers find her exasperating and unreachable. (Which of course means that she has a brilliant future in rock'n'roll.) And then there's the opposite extreme, Misty, who's in her last year of eligibility for the camp, and has fallen prey to the usual effects of poverty.

Part of the implicit thrill of seeing a film like **Rock'n'Roll Camp for Girls** comes from that chance that, somehow, remarkable music will emerge from this most unlikely place. A feature film like **Linda, Linda, Linda** (reviewed here not long ago) promises that a garage aesthetic can produce miracles unexpectedly. Only a day passes in camp before the coordinators randomly change members of the various groups. Now, the girls have to find some way of creating music that's based less on their personal tastes than their willingness to compromise. The camp, we find, has very little to do with actually producing good music—it's more about finding a way for a few random non-musicians to transcend differences with the help of some amplification. In other words, it's a typical summer camp experience—with guitars.

The DIY spirit produces a strange combination of rock outfits by the time camp reaches its climax, with live performances from each of the groups. These bands don't seem to have been imprinted with a specific style. The concept is for the girls to express themselves, and then let them worry about the details later.

The performances? The filmmakers wisely edit through a few of the least gawky performances; otherwise, there's little hope for even a hint of rock magic to enliven the show. At best, the music is something like a very elementary, badly hobbled L7.

The filmmakers meticulously avoid the easy joke at the expense of the girls, but it comes out seeming over-edited. This was no doubt necessary, if only to protect the girls. But it makes for certain blandness, and some of the film's heart has been tossed away with the humor. As a result of its limitations, there are times when you think the subject matter would have been better served by a half-hour TV special.

In his debut feature film, fearless documentarian Morgan Spurlock tried to force down McDonalds meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, super-sizing whenever asked. He did it for an entire month, tripling his cholesterol, until his plain-talking doctor urged him to just stop. After thirty days, Spurlock found he was constantly sleepy, and addicted to watching TV programs without otherwise moving much.

Spurlock is fond of making obvious points, but in extravagant ways. He's an Every-Man who gets a chance to perform dares the rest of us are more comfortable simply hearing about. Nearly five years after his epic brush with fast food, he's come out with **Where in the World is Osama bin Laden?** It's a (mostly) sincere investigation, and he can't be faulted with trying to have a good time trying to address the question.

Morgan Spurlock tries to pass himself off as a naïve investigator, especially early on. Unlike Michael Moore, who has always put his earnest political credentials front and center, Spurlock keeps his agenda hidden behind a folksy exterior that somehow manages to break down even the most resistant interviewees. None of his subjects can't have the remotest hint of Bin Laden's location, but Spurlock asks anyway, if only for the reactions.

The film begins energetically, with Spurlock singing a music video with computer-animated camels; it's funny, at least for a while, but at least it puts the film firmly on course. The movie's title really tells it all; the remainder of the documentary tries to find entertaining ways to say it. For example, early on he visits Egypt, where Ayman Al-Zawahiri's kin might be able to put him on his course. Well, apparently Al-Zawahiri's busy, so Spurlock is just as happy asking roadside teenagers about Bin Laden's location. Most of them giggle, though most seem understandably confused. In reality, he'll talk to anyone, and the sternest faces dissolve to smiles after a few minutes talking to Spurlock.

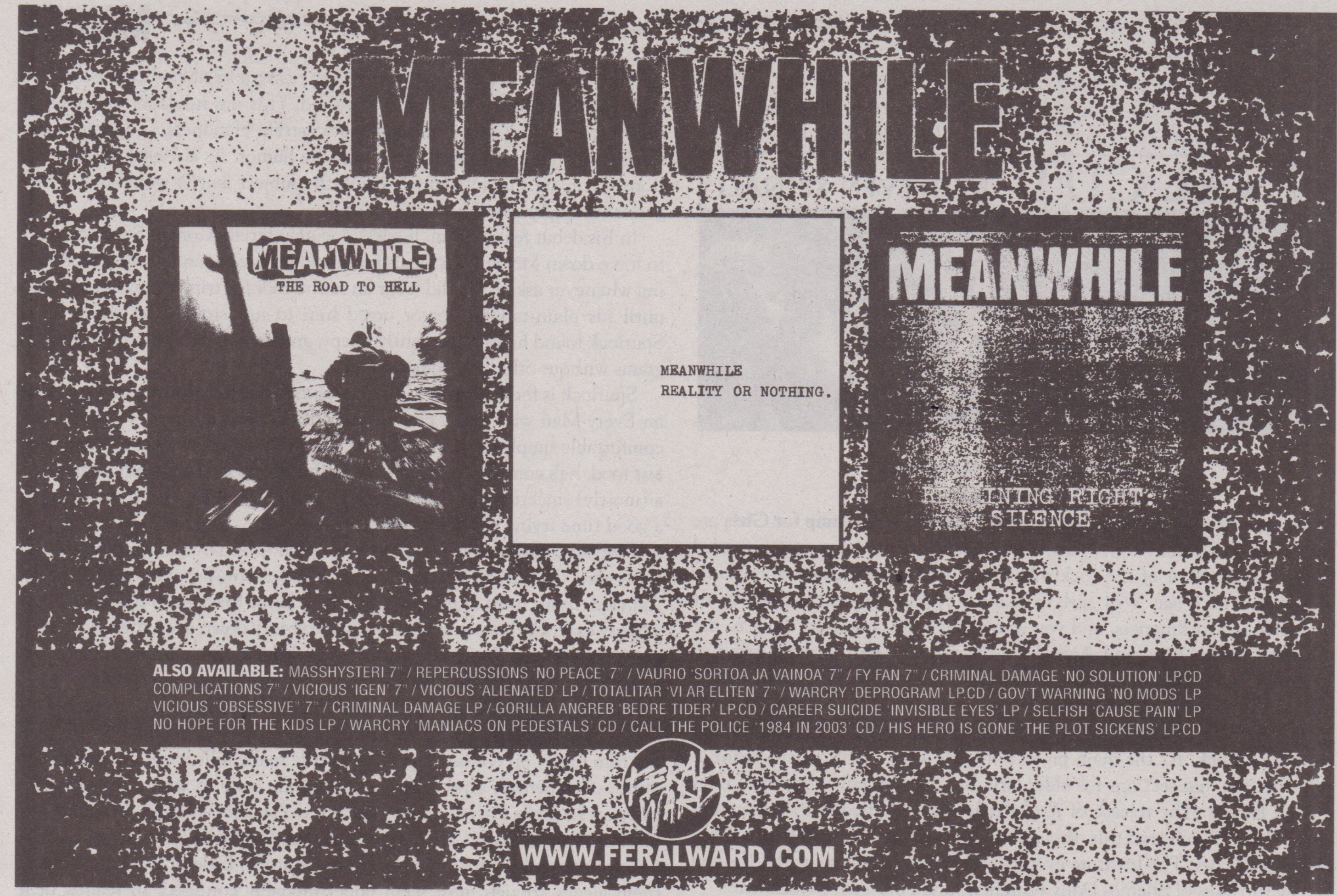
Morgan Spurlock clearly has his answer to the film's question from the start—that is, he'll never be able to penetrate the Middle East mind to find a longitude and latitude for Bin Laden. However, he uses the quest to ask a related question, which may be even more important: Why does the world seem to hate America?

The answer, which we hear time and again, is that even the men who unapologetically criticize US policy say that they have nothing against the average American citizen. Or maybe it's their polite way of saying that they have nothing against Spurlock, who charms several families into having him over for meals. In places as diverse as Palestine and Saudi Arabia, opinions may vary, but each family is given a chance to have their say. For Spurlock, that's one more group of people who aren't Bin Laden.

You'd think Orthodox Israelis on the West Bank would be Spurlock's most ardent supporters. To the contrary, he's shunned by the passers-by, and several threaten him. It's one of only two places in Spurlock's journey where he seems to be in palpable danger. (The other is Afghanistan, where, late in the film, he opts to veer away from an area known for the abduction of Americans. Afghanistan is as forbidding as you'd expect, and Spurlock has no interest in tarrying where he's probably not wanted.)

Where in the World is Osama bin Laden? might very well have taken the risk if not for Spurlock's own burgeoning family—a film family that has found a way into his personal story. His wife has become prodigiously pregnant by film's end, and his pledge to her rushes him back to America, bringing his mid-east adventures to a close.

For all of Spurlock's work, he doesn't emerge with a wealth of cutting-edge insights; other documentaries on the subject have been more penetrating and even moving. Morgan Spurlock excels at posing a question that, with all the time and expense, should have been answered long ago. At the very least, Spurlock suggests that perhaps we're asking the wrong questions.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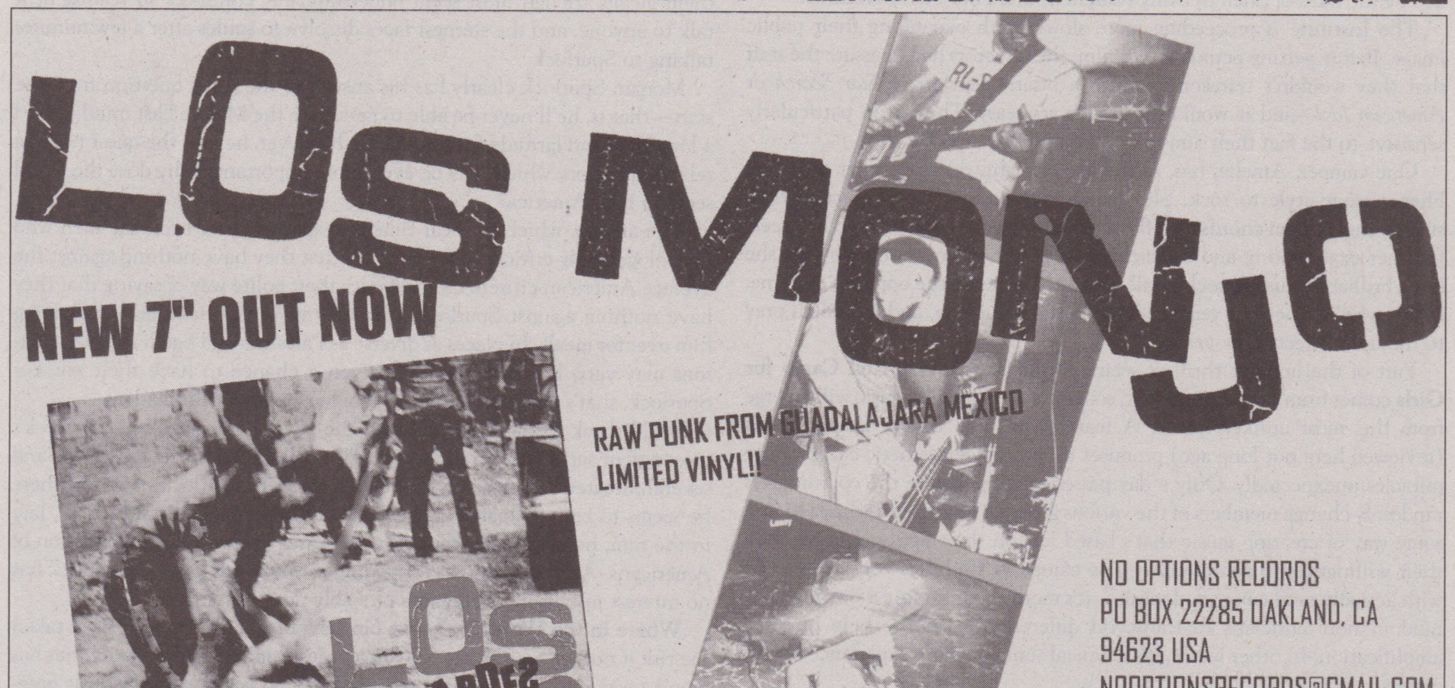
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ABDUKTIO – "Thermidor" LP

This is what MODERN LIFE IS WAR might sound like if they grew up in Finland. There are two sides to this. On one, the music can be creative and interesting and they bust out some breakdowns that wouldn't be out of place on an Ebullition release. Also, the packaging is really nice, the lyrics are solid, and they can play. On the other side of the coin, it's screamy, well-produced hardcore that has some metallic tendencies. The scene is saturated with this stuff, and it's too rock for my tastes. If you're into MODERN LIFE IS WAR… (P$)
(Combat Rock Industry, Fredrikinkatu 58, 00100 Helsinki, FINLAND, www.fireinsidemusic.com)

A.H. KRAKEN – LP

A.H. KRAKEN might be the best thing from France since freedom fries! It's the lo-fi, noisy punk sound you would expect from In The Red, but I think this one might be a little better than the rest of the lot. The band cites SUICIDE and CRIME among their influences, and I suppose one could simply describe this band's sound as an imagined CRIME covering SUICIDE. The guitars are disjointed and really, really, really, really repetitive. If that doesn't really, really, really, really bug ya, then ya might like this record. It doesn't bug me. I really, really, really, really like repetition. Song titles are in French, English, and German, but the vocals all sound Greek to me. I either can't understand a word or I misunderstand every word, but it doesn't matter 'cuz the snotty snarls work a-okay over the short and sweet songs. This LP comes with a free CD and has got a cool cover with a blurred photo of a chick holding a gun. (MU)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

THE AGGRAVATION – "Runaway" EP

Oh, France and your beautiful monopoly on all that is the dark post-punk sound… Three tracks of pure, drop-to-the-floor brilliance. It's brooding and grooving, taking in the sounds that are currently championed by Portland's now-defunct OBSERVERS, Austin's MANIKIN, and fellow countrymen FRUSTRATION. More of a punk rock edge then the later two, with an increase in the energy levels while still retaining that EMPIRE/KILLING JOKE/WARSAW-inspired bleakness. THE AGGRAVATION has set the standard for the year, and I can't see anything tumbling this classic from its number one spot. Amazing. I can't stop playing this. (SD)
(Jojo, jojorecords@gmail.com)

AMÖBA – "En Doende Varld" EP

Seven tracks of fast, raw, and driving hardcore punk that could easily have made it onto *Really Fast* volumes 1-3. The vocals are what make this an even better record—throat-tearing screams rise above a solid backdrop of frantic Scandi-hardcore. Reminds me of the first time I heard the MOB 47 EP. Excellent! (MS)
(Hardware, www.hardware-records.com)

ANGRY 4 LIFE – "Some Songs We Recorded 2004-2006" CD

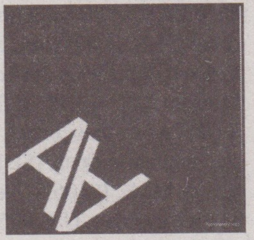
This San Jose band plays angry, snotty, beer-drenched punk that sounds like first-record-era BAD RELIGON mixed with mid-tempo UK82 punk. It's all about bad attitude, hangin' out, and getting drunk with no future. Fun stuff like that. I like it. It's pretty solid shit. (AD)
(Vinehell, PO Box 36131, San Jose, CA 95158, www.vinhell.com)

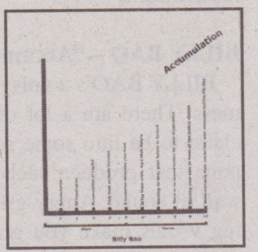
ANTI-YOU – "Making Your Life Miserable" EP

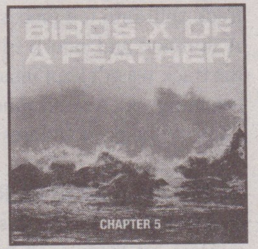
I absolutely loved this band's debut disc; eye-watering hardcore in the vein of GOVERNMENT WARNING and their ilk, with a dash of the crazed, out-of-control element that made Italian bands of old like NEGAZIONE and WRETCHED so great. I am not sure if this was recorded earlier than that record, as the recording doesn't sound quite as good. *Making Your Life Miserable* is a sure-fire ripper, make no mistake, but it didn't jump off the record player the same way the last one did. Fans of the new breed of lightening-fast straight-up hardcore, this record will do you no wrong. (TB)
(No Way, Idlewood Ave, Richmond, VA 23221, www.nowayrecords.com)

BALLPOINT – "Get Loose" CD

A disc chock-full of up-tempo melodic punk courtesy of this Tasmanian band. Lots of Fat Wreck Chords influences here. A little NOFX, early PROPAGANDHI, and their fellow Land-Down-Under-ers FRENZAL RHOMB, plus sometimes a sound somewhere along the lines of JIMMY







EAT WORLD. The band is really tight and most of the songs are pretty catchy. BALLPOINT's songs range from the light-hearted ("Beer Song" and "Dirty Mrs. Johnson") to more serious subjects like the war in Iraq ("Juba") and racist nationalism in "Riots and Wrongs." An all-around quality release. (RK)
(Disconnect, www.disconnectrecords.com)

BEERZONE / SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN – "Kingdom of the Dead" split CD
England's long running boot-boys, BEERZONE, bring five tracks of super tough street punk with abundant melody and fist-in-the-air moments to suit any pit-loving mohawk or baldy. If you're already a fan, this will not disappoint. America's SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN brings the energy levels up with a healthy injection of spiky UK82 punk rock. A band that would not look out of place on Punkcore with enough Durty Mick, 190H, EXPLOITED, and ONE WAY SYSTEM in their bones to justify every single stud on their jackets. (SD)
(Durty Mick, 19106 S. Normandie Ave, PO Box 311, Torrance, CA 90502, www.durtymick-records.com)

BILLY BAO – "Accumulation" EP
BILLY BAO's a noisy, plodding, enthralling mess. There are a lot of bands out there that claim to be into some sort of noise thing, but none that produce such an utterly wonderful wall of sound. Angry grumblings and screeching vocals make you grit your teeth, but that doesn't mean you don't want to hear more. One track split into ten pieces of equal length, side-A in mono and side-B in stereo. I wonder why the track wasn't kept intact? Disjointed and disorienting, but a good time. (CK)
(Xerox Musik, no address)

BIRDS OF A FEATHER – "Chapter 5" EP
Something about this band's first couple releases set them apart from the crowd of '88-revival youth crew bands; this EP, however, falls right in there with the rest doing competently performed but completely forgettable YOUTH OF TODAY/GORILLA BISCUITS-worship. Perhaps I'm just not enough of a fan of the subgenre to notice the subtle differences that make BIRDS OF A FEATHER unique? Anyway, the playing is tight, the recording's good, there's professional photos of the band rocking out and standing around in cool t-shirts, etc. (CS)
(Commitment, Klein Muiden 38, 1939 RL Nigtevecht, NETHERLANDS, www.commitmentrecords.nl)

BIRTHDAY SUITS / PEELANDER Z – split EP
Sounds like Japan via the Midwest. Not so much in a Snuffy Smiles sense; it has more in common with SWEET J.A.P. than it does with BLOTTO. From what I understand, PEELANDER Z is aesthetically like the Power Rangers of punk. I don't know, the shtick doesn't really appeal too much to me. It's by no means bad, and I actually want to like it, but it's weird in a conventional way, instead of weird in a natural, Joey Ramone type of way. BIRTHDAY SUITS' song on here is kind of like WIRE ('cause it's static) mixed up with THE RAMONES and a hint of THE MARKED MEN. It's good. The PEELANDER Z side should appeal to fans of maybe THE PHENOMENAUTS, and the BIRTHDAY SUITS side should appeal to people with exquisite taste. (P$)
(Crustacean, PO Box 829, Madison, WI 53701, www.crustaceanrecords.com)

BLACK MARKET FETUS / IN DEFENSE – split EP
Wow, this rips! BLACK MARKET FETUS does the powerviolence/grind thing like MAGRUDERGRIND—messy and tight at the same time. Different speeds range from blasting to thrashing to moments of metal with lots of riffs. IN DEFENSE does fast hardcore and the songs are sort of anthems. Their songs are short, quick, and to-the-point. They also throw in moments of straight-ahead hardcore, like on "Two-Week Notice," which seems like it's about selling out, or at least taking part in the business of making grind/hardcore. "All Hail the Taco Avenger" is more powerviolence. Get this 7". (MH)
(Give Praise, www.givepraiserecords.com)

BLACKOUT – "Stop the Clock" CD
Wanky, mid-tempo, D-beat, MOTÖRHEAD-meets-DISCHARGE, but with some metal-y parts; I'm almost reminded of IRON MAIDEN. Gruff vocalist, heavy guitars…not bad, kind of catchy, but also kind of inept in a non-charming way. The drummer's snare rolls are consistently one count too long and kind of throws everything off. The band is not very tight and maybe PE should have put their collective shoulders around the band and said, "How about a 7", guys?" Oddly enough, the song "Secret" reminds me a bit of LEATHERFACE. Go figure. The last song has a METALLICA acoustic-guitar-style intro and is about *Apocalypse Now*, so all you Hetfield/Coppola fans take note. Vinyl available from Aborted Society. (VL)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 18051, Minneapolis, MN 55418, www.profaneexistence)

BLACK SISTER / UNHOLY GRAVE – split EP
The UNHOLY GRAVE tracks have a curious lo-fi sound. The vocals sound like they were sung in a small tunnel. As usual for UNHOLY GRAVE, Takaho does some unique vocals for a grindcore band. The first thing you hear on their side of the 7" is funny vocal noises, and towards the end of the second track he sings clean and does sort of a short, spoken thing. It all works. These three songs grind heavily, and honestly are some of the best UNHOLY GRAVE tracks I've heard. The lo-fi-ness of the UNHOLY GRAVE side became even more apparent when I flipped over the 7" and the other side was much louder. BLACK SISTER gives us two tracks; the first, a heavy thrasher about either going to sea or hunting at sea, includes a guitar solo. The second track is a ripping cover of ANTI-CIMEX. Are they really singing this cover in Gaelic? This track of course sounds like thrashy crust. I don't remember if the guitar solos are in the original. (MH)
($7 ppd: Problem, www.problemrecords.co.uk)

BLANK ITS – "Windows Are Dirty/Divorce"
First new blip outta this Pacific Northwest trio in a while, and a hearty welcome back it is. Progression? Perhaps not, but all the key elements that impressed me in their previous releases are just as strong here. Fuzzed, nervous punk that's as likely to please pop fans as it is "serious" nerds. A Swee-Tart fueled A-FRAMES, perhaps? Assuming you haven't already been stifled by "off" product recently, the two tunes here ("Divorce" in particular) will provide a suitably strange soundtrack to your otherwise normal solo drunken sock-hopping. (MC)
(Sweet Rot, PO Box 78025. Vancouver, BC, V5N 5W1 CANADA)

BROWNTROUT / GLEAM GARDEN – split EP
DIY lo-fi tuneful punk. If you're familiar with this label then you know what to expect. These splits are usually made up of quality bands that play up-tempo, raw, JAWBREAKER-meets-LEATHERFACE-meets-CRIMPSHRINE-meets-SNUFF-type punk rock. Two Japanese bands this time; both GLEAM GARDEN and BROWNTROUT are very rough-'round-the-edges and noisy (in the case of GLEAM GARDEN almost screamo), but melodic and catchy at the same time. Good as usual. (AD)
(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Kita-ku, Kyoto,'603-8117, JAPAN)

CELEBRITY AUTOPSY – "Fast American Rock 'n' Roll" CD
Most of the "ballz 2 tha wall"-style R'n'R that seems to end up in the review bin at *MRR* is of the scary, misogynist, mid-to-late-30s,

bar-crawling GG-wannabe variety; the lads in CELEBRITY AUTOPSY, however, seem to be a good decade-and-a-half younger and way less intense. Songs like "Wrecking Ball" and "45 Women" might paint a wild picture, but this is so harmless it makes BELLE AND SEBASTIAN seem like the CRO-MAGS. It's gotta be at least half tongue-in-cheek, though—who could sing lyrics like "My heart is on ice, babe, but yours is on fire/You're racing towards me on a dogsled of desire" (from the track "Love Blizzard," of course) with a straight face? (CS)
(I Hate Punk Rock, 4429 Patston Drive, St. Louis, MO 63128, www.ihatepunkrock.net)

THE CHORDS – "The Mod Singles Collection" CD

And on the first day, God created THE JAM, and on the second, THE CHORDS. Sorry folks, not open for discussion—it's in the Good Book so no back-chat. This is a CD comp of all their singles and more; not one duffer on it. Boasting one of the best drummers ever to come out of the '79 mod revival scene (Buddy Ascott), backed up with a vocalist that gave Weller a run for his money (Chris Pope) and a string section more akin to the STIFF LITTLE FINGERS and THE UNDERTONES than to the sugary sounds usually associated with this scene. In my humble opinion, if this band had been more prolific and stuck around for more than the four years they existed, then God would have had a bit of a headache on his hands. Never once losing their roots worship of THE SMALL FACES, THE WHO, and WILSON PICKETT, but still managing to bring the music to the raw energy levels usually found in the gobbing punk scene. One of my favorites of all time, this band a must for all those fresh-faced power-pop newcomers. Pick it up, then go help yourself to their classic *So Far Away* LP. A must. (SD)
(Captain Mod, www.captainoi.com)

CHRIST ON PARADE – "Loud and Live: KFJC Pit" LP

It's kind of hard to describe CHRIST ON PARADE without getting nostalgic about the scene in the late-'80s and early-'90s. They truly paved the way for many bands reaching beyond just 4/4 hardcore, and their sound delved into all sorts of corners yet to be tapped in a punk rock setting. The nature of the band was very avant-garde and respectable—without being technically the most proficient, they managed to hit a deep, primal sound that has propelled them into the forefront of punk history. This record represents the reunion of a great band and, in essence, it represents a real dedication to playing music without barriers or industry hype. CHRIST ON PARADE is the same hardcore outcast as when they started. This live radio session recants all the musical mobility the band had, with a slight twist due to the presence of Barrie, the original singer, on some of the later material where guitarist Noah covered lead vocals (on albums). The only qualm I have with this recording is that the vocals seem a bit subdued, probably because of being in a sound booth and not live in front of a proper audience. As a live record, the sound quality is great and there are some minor changes the band improvised to make it interesting, for better or worse. I believe this record is limited so you may want to grab it now while you can. CHRIST ON PARADE is legendary and well deserving of this live homage to their greatness as a band. (WK)
(Prank, P.O. Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.prankrecords.com)

CHURCH OF THE SATURDAY SAINTS – "14 Rotten Tomatoes" CD

So here's a 14-song full-length CD of mid-tempo country punk rock from San Jose. A lot of this album wouldn't even be considered "punk rock" if it wasn't for most of the band being comprised of people from other punk bands. CHURCH OF THE SATURDAY SAINTS is made up of members from ODD NUMBERS, WHISKEY SUNDAY, and SHITKICKER. They would fit into the Gainesville or Nashville scene pretty well, I'd imagine. One acoustic guitar, one electric guitar with distortion, really gritty vocals, and a really polished sound. You know those country songs from THE SWINGING UTTERS' later albums? That's what these guys remind me of. (FS)
(Vinehell, PO Box 36131, San Jose, CA 95158, www.vinhell.com)

COCK SPARRER – "Did You Have A Nice Life Without Me/So Many Things"

I am a man of contradictions; month after month I bleat about hating all these old fuckers reforming and making substandard records. Now, one of my few exceptions is COCK SPARRER—every record they have made over the past three decades has been boss, and this new one is no exception. Little deviation from the "boys down the boozer" pub rock, but that's fine by me. The thing with this band is they are great songwriters; it's all about the hooks, man! Check the new album, it's fantastic!! (TB)
(Dirty Punk, BP 10302, 59666 Villenueve d'Ascq Cedex, FRANCE)

COKEROCKET – "Give It All Up" EP

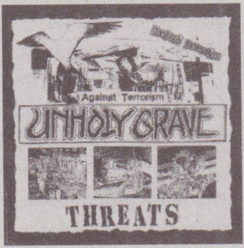
Oh, I quite like this one. It's kind of punk, but more new wave. I'll call it new wave with a punk sensibility. It's got the high-pitched female vocals and the synthesizer, making it the complete deal. And it's all delivered at a pretty decent clip. It's not going to change your life, but it's a pretty damn good record. On clear pink vinyl and limited to 350. (KK)
(Gonna Puke, www.gonnapuke.com)

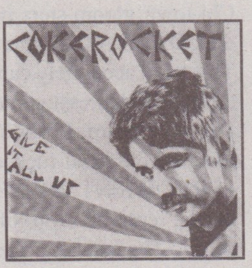
CULT FICTION – "Spitfire" CD

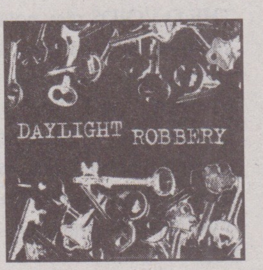
BOTCH and QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE had a fucked-up baby… Here it is. Relying mostly on the BOTCH style of heavy, metallic atmosphere and technical proficiency, CULT FICTION occasionally breaks to make room for the gag-inducing I-really-wanna-rip-my-fucking-ears-off singing parts that do really sound a lot like QOTSA. Oof. OK, so after half of this CD, I've only heard a part like that once on this album and other moments of this I'm really getting into, but the taste in my mouth is still that of the bitter lick of an un-wiped anus, and I can't listen any longer. (JU)
(Goodfellow, 22 Wilson St., Hamilton, ON L85 1C5, CANADA, www.goodfellowrecords.com)

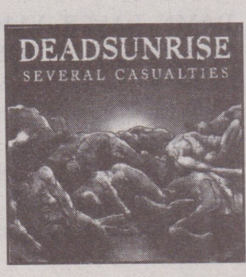
CULTURCIDE – "Gigs for an Imaginary Audience" CD

Gigs for an Imaginary Audience is a great collection of









'80s rehearsal and live recordings from this wildly fun Houston band. CULTURCIDE were art punks with extremely entertaining and sometimes insulting stream-of-conscious lyrics. They are best known for the album *Tacky Souvenirs of Pre-Revolutionary America*, which recorded new lyrics over the backing tracks to some of the lamest '80s songs and earned the band a few lawsuits. None of those songs are on this collection. Instead, here you are treated to original songs. The music is rudimentary and the lyrics are not always pleasant, but it sure is a lot of fun. (CK)
(no label, no address)

THE DAILY VOID – "Man/Machine" EP

So far, DAILY VOID is batting 1,000 as far as I'm concerned, and this record keeps that perfect streak going for one more round. "Man/Machine" is a much more oppressive and suffocating song than any of the others that the Chi-town gloom-sters have produced, but that dark DAILY VOID charm is as present as ever. This band accurately captures the sound of day-after drug-depression more than most anything I've ever heard. If you're not already familiar, imagine the head-fucked, fuzzed-out isolation of RUDIMENTARY PENI engulfing the best of the current crop of noise-fucked garage skuzz. The sound of technology being born, technology being laid to waste, and the machines taking over. Love it! (JU)
(Florida's Dying, www.floridasdying.com)

THE DAILY VOID / THE O VOIDS – split EP

THE DAILY VOID plays demento-punk that is certain to make even the most morose and melancholy robot dance. These loonies are creating a racket that undoubtedly drowns out all the peripheral noise of Midwest city-living. One song is pop-gone-wrong, the other is an industrial mind-melter. Both require repeated listens. THE O VOIDS play noisy pop that sounds like it could be an unearthing of some obscure band's practice tape from the 1980s—somewhere in between MISSION OF BUMRA and DINOSAUR JR. The hollow, budget recording keeps it from sounding radio-friendly. I like '80s indie rock so I can definitely hang with THE O VOIDS' raw pop songs. Both sides win! Yay! (CI)
(Don't Hit!, www.myspace.com/dhrrecords)

DAMN LASER VAMPIRES – "Gotham Beggars Syndicate" CD

DAMN LASER VAMPIRES plays surfy goth. There are songs about god and graveyards. The vocals are so high in the mix, so overdramatic and an imitation of solo PETER MURPHY. I cannot take this seriously. (CK)
(Devil's Ruin, devilsruin.com)

DARK AGES – "4 Songs" EP

Fucking A! This shit will kick your ever-loving white suburban butt into next week! Knoxville, Tennessee's DARK AGES take the hardcore gauntlet and run to the hills! The instant the needle touches the vinyl on "Contemplating Suicide," you know you're in thrash heaven. You fucks are in deep trouble!! Apparently this EP is a cleaned-up version of DARK AGES' impressive demo, and it fucking rules! DARK AGES touches on subjects near and dear to all punk; "No Cops, No Christians," captures two of the most heinous of all war criminals in the USA at their worst. The EP is fleshed-out with the song "I Can't Have Any Fun." Fucking brilliant. This is a must-have EP for skins and punks who have a brain in their head! Smart hardcore for the thinking man's thrasher! You need to order this vibrant thrash masterpiece ASAP from… (BR)
(Get Revenge, getrevengerecords.com)

THE DARVOCETS – "Are New Wave" LP

THE DARVOCETS aren't in fact new wave. They're actually a quirky hardcore band that appears to get its lyrical content from the *Fortean Times*. Musically, they're all over the place: the music stops, starts, and reverses direction without warning, as the singer squeals and growls over the top about alien technology, human experimentation, and Bigfoot. Forced weirdness is supremely annoying but I have a feeling this band is genuinely out there; possibly as a result, this record is a totally fun listen. (AM)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – "Washtenaw" EP

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY immediately calls to mind the Los Angeles X, from the slight rockabilly edge on the jangle-y punk guitar to the Exene-meets-Kathleen Hanna vocals. The similarities are so in-your-face that they're going to have a hard time escaping the comparison (not that they seem to be trying), but the four songs on this EP definitely stand on their own. There's not much that's original anymore and usually when something does come along that's never been done before, it sucks. There aren't many bands going around like now that are capable of pulling off this sound this well (except for maybe X themselves), so this is as welcome as a cool iced tea on a hot day. (AM)
(Residue, residuerecords@gmail.com)

DEAD DOG – LP

DEAD DOG is catchy, female-fronted punk rock a la THIS IS MY FIST without all the fury and a li'l bit more lo-fi pop thrown in. This is something I can see going over well with those who liked the Plan-It-X label before it went too folkie. Good stuff. (JF)
(Mauled by Tigers, www.mauledbytigers.com)

DEAD SUNRISE – "Several Casualties" EP

Four tracks of metallic hardcore from Finland channeling "amps-to-11" low-end hardcore like HIS HERO IS GONE or THE AWAKENING, with lurching metallic heaviness and breaks—but unlike HHIG's reliance on powerviolence-y quick thrashing, the core of the music here is more reminiscent of the boisterous, straightforward basics of early UK hardcore, or its reverberations through classic world hardcore. (Start at the THE VARUKERS, work your way to RIISTEYT, keep going to BASTARD, and end back at ÄÄRTILIA and THE VARUKERS.) But DEAD SUNRISE twists that with metal riffing and a marked Southern crust influence, and occasionally throws in not-too-obnoxious hardcore-ish floor-punch breakdowns. Snare-driven with a clean mix that doesn't completely serve the music well, if plunged more into distortion and noise, it would gain in intensity and even more immensity. Throaty vocals, sung in English, sit above the music, barking dire, metaphorical lyrics about the world's collapse that seemingly suffer in translation at points — "Fear for hate for my blown off limbs" which then ends in a chant of "So strip, face the floor"… What??? Cranked loud, this doesn't prevent it from being a crushing debut! (KS)
(Nightstick Justice, www.nightstickjustice.com)

DEATHZONE – "When the Punks of the World Unite" CD

The name DEATHZONE is quite apropos looking at the photo of these three geezers on the inside of the CD. (What am I joking about? I'm hot on their heels myself.) Actually, that's one of the coolest things about real punk rock, that if you still *feel* it, you can keep on playing it until you die. And in that sense, DEATHZONE rules. This trio have been feeling it, doing it, and playing it since the late '70s (and this disc includes three tracks from way back when). Unfortunately, in the sense of me actually wanting to listen to this repeatedly, they do not. Relatively standard liberty-spike 'n' mohawk punk. Think mid-'80s UK bands like THE EXPOLITED, GBH, VARUKERS but loosely played. As far as punk is concerned, DEATHZONE appears to be in it for life (pun intended), and for that I applaud them. Musically, nothing really grabbed me on this album. Not terrible but not great either. (RK)
(Thought Provocation, www.myspace.com/deathzoneuk)

DEEP THROAT – "Thrashin' People, Music, and Thoughts" CD

Not the Japanese band of antiquity, nor an apparent direct homage of the cinematic ver-

sion, this is 15 tracks of technical crossover party hardcore from Italy. Well played with aggressive intensity, but with clean recording values similar to Fat Wreck records, with an upfront drum club-style snare sound, compartmentalized guitars, and clean vocals. Through the metallic riffing the tracks occasionally pick up similar Fat-style melody to the song structures. Topped with sung vocals that come out similar to Colin from GBH singing largely silly tracks about Sylvester Stallone, DRI, name dropping Martha Splatterhead, etc., etc., though the lyrics are near impossible to read!!! Imagine dudes from STRUNG OUT and MUNICIPAL WASTE mistakenly jumping in each other's tour vans in Italy and you get the idea… (KS)
(Fisheye, fisheye@hotmail.it)

THE DEHUMANIZERS – "The First Five Years (Of Drug Use) Anthology" CD

I gotta be honest here, I have never heard or even heard of this band. Am I alone on this? Well, this is a collection of THE DEHUMANIZERS' recorded output from 1986-1991 with a bonus disc of their *End of Time* album. They describe themselves as a cross between ZAPPA and the CIRCLE JERKS. A more fitting description is '80s skate-core/hardcore (maybe like the BONELESS ONES or BEYOND POSESSION) with a horrible bar-rock/metal bent. This isn't my thing at all—it's a bit too goofy and "fun" for me. There is a really sweet liner note, though, that makes me feel bad for this review—"This double-CD is dedicated to the living memory of Tim Yohannon! We wish you were alive to review it." I do too, guys, I do too. (JU)
(Portnow Intertainment Group, PO Box 13536, Des Moines, WA 98196, www.myspace.com/portnowintertainmentgroup)

DELTA FORCE II – "Symphony for the Good Booze and Bad Metal" LP

Although the album title and disturbing *Transformers*-style logo would lead you to believe this record is terrible, the honest truth is that it's actually pretty damn rockin'. It's a party thrasher's wet dream, actually! You got some proficient musicians playing their asses off with palm-muting mayhem and loads of really good breakdowns. The recording rules, too. The vocals are in Finnish, so I really can't even fathom all the interesting topics of their lyrics, but from the crucial thrash photo collage, it looks like they have a good sense of humor, and the vocals do stand out. This slab of wax is worthy to sit beside any MUNICIPAL WASTE, GHOUL, VITIMIN X, or WEHRMACHT record. I'm sure I have met some of these guys at festivals in Europe? Can't remember too well (thank you, booze). (WK)
(Nightstick Justice, www.nightstickjustice.com)

DERRIDA – "Vastakirjoituksia" LP

DERRIDA plays contemporary sounding hardcore from Finland. Twelve songs with plenty of changes that manage to maintain power and energy. Heavy guitar riffing and insane dual vocals add for an overall intense record. Lyrics are somewhat poetic and introspective. I like how "Blind Mantras" reads—a nice stab at religion. (MS)
(Popos Bistro, vaski@netikka.fi)

DESTROY EVERYTHING – "Freedom of Speech Means Talk Is Cheap" CD

When this album started off, it had me singing along to its great opener, "True Believer," within a minute. This Chicago-area band has a really good '77-style-punk-meets-NOFX sound—catchy hooks that pull you in, but still snotty enough to keep things rough. The vocals remind me a bit of Joey Vindictive meets THE SIGN-OFFS. Intelligent, often witty, well-written lyrics make the good songs even better. Check out "The Kids Are All Liars" and "Alter or Abolish" for examples. Nice artwork on the packaging, appropriating symbols from US currency and taking the piss out of these "Great Seals." Though the album fades a bit here and there, it is quite impressive overall. Nice work. (RK)
(Tent City, www.tentcityrecords.com)

DIFFERENCE OF OPINION / THE SLANDER!N – split EP

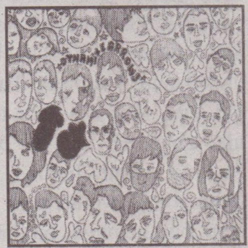
Kind of an odd pairing here—maybe they're friends? Maybe they play shows together and DIFFERENCE OF OPINION gives THE SLANDER!N their pomade and drink tickets, and in return, well, I don't know…what do straight edge people do or would want in exchange? THE SLANDER!N plays psychobilly-type stuff; loose guitar leads, upright bassist plucking along, kinda' growling, kinda' crooning singer. Sounds like the guitarist is playing through a chorus pedal and the second song is called "Hot Rod Rock and Roll Beast," so I think psychobilly is a mildly suitable descriptor. You'd be hard-pressed to find anything like this in my record collection, but this is pretty cool shit. I'm digging it. DIFFERENCE OF OPINION is a whole other ballgame. Real fast hardcore that reminds me of a slew of '90s bands, plus a heavy straight edge sound and vibe. Two songs by these dudes, second has the requisite sing-along background vocals popular with the X'd-up crowd. They don't have the heavy *chunka-chunka* guitar tone that is also popular with the crew, and that's a good thing in my book. The record's pairing is confusing, but both bands are pretty good at what they do and lead their respective sides well. Silk-screened cover, four songs total, no lyric sheet. (VL)
(Split Seven, 12405 Venice #265, Los Angeles, CA 90066)

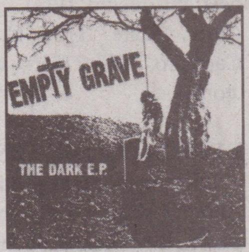
DISGUSTING LIES – "Beginning" 2xCD

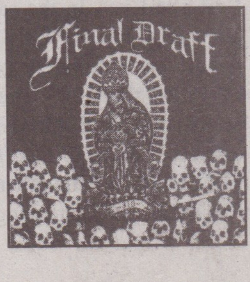
An awesome CD discography of only the earliest stuff by these Polish purveyors of crust and grind. These guys have been at it since the mid-'90s and certainly have the sound from that era that many of us cut our crusty teeth on. Also included is a second CD with a live show on it! (NM)
(MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN, www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr)

DISKAAOS – "Sota On Sotaa" EP

This is the kind of record any self respecting Dis-beat head or Finnish punk fan will instantly crack a smile at. If you like DISCHARGE and KAAOS, you really can't go wrong. But truth be told, these Finns far more resemble their countrymen then the lads from Stoke-on-Trent. There are times where this almost resembles rockin'







Finno-punk (e.g. KLAMYDIA). But it's great, there is no doubt. Apparently this was recorded in 1996 and is just now seeing the light of day! (NM)
(Nightstick Justice, www.nightstickjustince.com)

DOGSHIT BOYS – "Business Doing Pleasure with You" CD
Absolutely sleazy, retarded, and catchy punk from Finland that sounds like it could have been pulled from some long-lost *Bloodstains* compilation. Some of the lyrics are in Finnish and some are in English, but from the few I can understand, I can say that they are utterly stupid. One song is an ode to the singer's lover—his right hand—and the other is about a soldier fucking dead bodies on the battlefield. Normally, I would pass this off as complete crap, but the music on here is so cool in a *KBD* way that I can't help but love it! There're only six tracks on this disc, so hopefully it will come out on a 7" sometime soon. These guys want to stay at your house and get free booze. Any takers? (BG)
(self-released, www.dogshitboys.com)

DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Raw Energy" EP
This band's LP should have been an easy top-ten last year, but the vocals and recording inexplicably killed it for me. In contrast, the second I heard this 7" I knew I had to get ahold of one instantly. The true sound of frustration, fury, dumb rage—just the best kind of hardcore, in other words. It's got the wild abandon of the best Italian hardcore combined with the brutal fucked-up times of early C.O.C. or fuckin' KORO. One side was recorded with a single mic in a practice space and it's just so dense and raging and gone. This is one of the best hardcore 7"s of the past few years, just fucking great timeless mutant music for malcontent types. The packaging is awesome too—cool clear vinyl and a silver gatefold cover. You need this record. (LG)
(Sorry State, 1102 N. Greensboro Street, Carrboro, NC 27510, www.sorrystaterecords.com)

DRIFTAGE / THE MISCASTS – split EP
Fuck, man, Snuffy Smiles can do no wrong. Another solid release from the best label on Earth. Both bands on here come to us from Japan. From start to finish, The MISCASTS side is mind-blowing. Probably their best stuff I've heard yet. In the same ballpark as really good BLOTTO or GLEAM GARDEN. Their American equivalent would be SEXY or FUTURE VIRGINS. The DRIFTAGE side was really good too; I'd have to say this is their best effort yet as well. One song reminded me of FLESHIES and the other of CHINESE TELEPHONES—both amazing and original. A great split and my vote for record of the month. (FS)
(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku Kita-Ku, Kyoto 603-8117, JAPAN)

DRINKERS PURGATORY – CD
This reminds me of a more raw KILLER DREAMER, or maybe a cross between a less poppy SASS DRAGONS and a more straightforward SHARK PANTS. It's got that Southwest sound that combines melodic punk, garage, and rock 'n' roll. I dug a lot of this record, but could have gone without the sound bites. Though, I actually didn't mind the two-minute one of the alarm going off in the end. I would like to see the band fully embrace their flirtation with no wave alarm percussion/break beats. If you're into the SASS DRAGONS or KILLER DREAMER, then give this a listen. (P$)
(Small Pool, 1806 W. Santa Ana St., Anaheim, CA 92805, www.smallpoolrecords.com)

DRY HEATHENS – "First Contact With Ground" CD
I wasn't into this. A musical blend of MISSION OF BURMA and early SOUL ASYLUM. The vocals are too off-key and the tunes aren't much better. Too bad because I like college rock punk as much as anyone. (RL)
(Churchkey, www.churchkeyrecords.com)

EAT SKULL – "Dead Families" EP
EAT SKULL came out with a 7" last year that kinda blew my mind. Now they've finished up a full-length with Siltbreeze that will be out before this issue goes to print. This Skulltones release follows-up where the last EAT SKULL single left off. The A-side is a noisy pop dance number for the socially awkward, loosely tied together with bleeting organ and a jamming bass line. And what the fuck, a PSYCHO SIN cover? Yes, it's a PSYCHO SIN cover on the B-side. That's what I call going there. The last song is a sing-along for the weird bit. Essential EAT SKULL tunes. Right now, it's being re-pressed for its second run. (AL)
(Skulltones, www.skulltones.com)

EAT SKULL – "Sick to Death" LP
This is really fucking good—mind-blowing fucked-up pop. It's somewhere in between a more distorted HOME BLITZ and TIMES NEW VIKING. Once in a while, it hits a stride that reminds me a little of the 50 MILLION album *This One's Pretty Good But I Like The Old Stuff Better*. The listening experience is rich in pleasure. The music vibrates with an uncontrolled splendor. Maybe the best LP I've heard all year. (P$)
(Siltbreeze, www.siltbreeze.com)

THE ELECRIC BUNNIES – "Chewing Gum" EP
Four tracks of THE PASTELS' C86 sound, mixed with some FYP sloppiness and Criminal IQ/Chicago-inspired lo-fi garage. It don't make a lot of sense, but these cats have managed to pull it off with a great little four-song EP. I think they take drugs. (SD)
(Florida's Dying, www.floridaisdying.com)

EMPTY GRAVE – "The Dark" EP
Judging by the person hanging from a tree on the cover, I kind of knew where things were going when I threw this on. Sure enough, first song starts off with "I wish I had a gun to blow of my head." Yikes. I like this record, though, 'cause songs of despair and fighting asshole jocks are something that I can relate to. And the music, sounding a little bit like RKL and CHRIST ON PARADE (but not quite as good), is something I can dig as well. But even with the early-'80s influence, this five-track EP doesn't really sound completely retro, either. What's up with all the good bands coming outta the Richmond, Virginia area? (BG)
(Absent, 1214 W. Franklin St. Apt. 5, Richmond, VA 23220)

ENDLESS BLOCKADE – "Primitive" LP
Incredible packaging, right off the bat; great grim artwork which suits this band! ENDLESS BLOCKADE plays some incredibly heavy grind/sludge with some definite metal influence. Bleak, dark, and ripping music all the way through, which punishes your ears. I may be crazy but at moments it sounded like early RED CHORD, and other moments it reached CAVITY levels of pummeling. (NM)
(20 Buck Spin, www.20buckspin.com)

FED UP! – "Fuck Your Life" CD
FED UP! is keeping the NYHC flavor alive with their CD entitled *Fuck Your Life*. This is some unrelenting old-school hardcore that sounds similar to BREAKDOWN and early AGNOSTIC FRONT, with songs about drinking cheap beer and "Old-School Pride." This is as real as it gets. (PL)
(United Riot, www.unitedriotrecords.com)

FINAL DRAFT – "Gun Slaughter" EP
Anytime you get more songs than inches, you're getting your money's worth, and holy shit, with these nine songs you're really cashing in. Reminds me of some of the '90s West Bay bands, especially PLUTOCRACY and BENUMB, and more recently, but geographically removed, RUNNING FOR COVER. Each song just pummels you in the head—total aural assault. (Though *shoot* may be a better verb considering the title, lyrical content, and machine gun samples.) The fast-and-heavy-HC-with-bass-breakdowns-to-blast-beats-then-to-slow-breakdowns formula that most bands don't try, FINAL DRAFT pulls off well. Three-

piece band, with the bassist and guitarist trading off the screaming, and I swear at times one of them sounds like Phil Anselmo from PANTERA. Violent lyrics of which only three of the nine are printed. DESPISE YOU's "My Westside Horizon" is covered, which is appropriate as both bands hail from Inglewood, California. Great record. (VL)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

FOSSIL FUEL – "Knife Rock" EP
FOSSIL FUEL is completely crude, lo-fi blasts of over-the-top genius stupidity. The band is a duo including Fortunata of Kent, Ohio's infamous SOCKEYE. According to the sleeve, the songs were recorded between 1990-1995. Accompanying the moseying, totally amateur guitar and keyboard drumbeats that bring to mind cassettes pieced together of radio shows and fucking around on your parents' stereo in your youth are tumbling vocals which are what you'd expect from a SOCKEYE side project…bloody stools, poopy stuff, etc. It's totally brilliant. (AL)
(Cubicle, PO Box 911373, Los Angeles, CA, 90091)

F.P. – "Ciment" CD
This band is from the Barcelona area, and they sing in Catalan. So, naturally, I have no idea what the lyrics are about. Musically, it's pretty straight-ahead punk rock with tinges of hardcore and occasional post-hardcore moments. The vocals are anthemic and feature lots of "woah-oh" backups. I bet if you knew Catalan, you'd be singing along. Strangely, the singer occasionally sounds like the guy from UNIFORM CHOICE, but that's the only comparison that could be made with that band. I wish there was more information about F.P. or their scene here, but on the whole this is a decent release that will probably go down well with locals and fans. (AM)
(Carnus, carnusrecords@yahoo.es)

GENETIKS – "De Bello Genetiko" CD
This starts out very interesting with over-affected instrumentation that has an indie rock/emo feel intermingling with elements of classic Deutch-punk, but what really makes it out of the ordinary are the KILLING JOKE/weird Polish-style simple, jerky bass lines and occasional blasts of keyboard fuzz. At times I'm feeling all of those things and even elements of LOST SOUNDS/DIGITAL LEATHER come to mind, but after about three songs or so I'm not paying attention anymore. I think it's a bit too scattered and white-elephant like for me. I'm all for stepping outside the comfort margins and really encourage it, actually, but I think GENETIKS' neuroses get in the way of listenability and just leave the audience lost on what is happening. (JU)
(Broken Silence, www.brokensilence.de)

GING NANG BOYS – "Libido" 12" EP
If you were to judge from the primitive artwork on the cover, you'd expect something different than the harmonized Japanese pop-punk inside. When "School Kill" (not their newest song by any means) escalates to top energy, the power-chord guitar will make your speakers (or headphones) rumble; the song that follows is even catchier, albeit at the expense of the expected power. But the real excitement is on the flip, which contains two more tunes recorded live in-studio (with the vocals a little out of tune), but the pop is more agreeably hard-edged. I look forward to seeing the video. Good, for its style. (SS)
(Phat 'n' Phunky Phonics, PO Box 7361, San Jose, CA 95150)

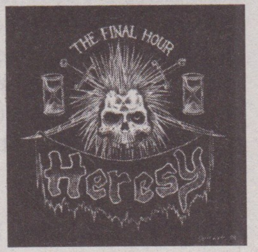
GIVE UP ALL HOPE / VAE VICTIS – split EP
Pretty cool split here, with GIVE UP ALL HOPE being from the UK and VAE VICTIS being from Sydney, down under. I had heard VAE VICTIS before and had been very impressed by their metallic, crusty, chaotic sound with killer male/female vocals. GIVE UP ALL HOPE is equally as impressive, with a bit more of a heavy, dirge-y sound. Sounds as if these guys have toured all over the place together. Great! (NM)
(Trujaca Fala, www.trujacafala.com)

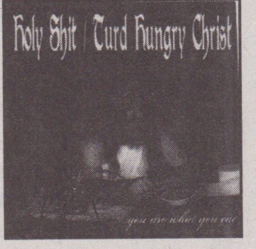
GORDON IVY & THE JAYBIRDS – "Happy Couples Never Last" CD
I was pleased to see this in my review box since I've been digging the *Midnight Rave* EP that just came out. This 15-track CD has a couple of songs from that EP, a bunch of new ones, and a couple of alternate mixes. If you haven't already tuned in to these cats, they play great Japanese thrashcore a la MAJESTIC FOUR, L.I.E., or JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS. Aesthetically, they sort of go for a '60s mod look, but that influence is nowhere to be found in the music (although it would be cool if it was). Fans of 625-style thrash would definitely want to check this out. (BG)
(Akashic, www.myspace.com/akashicrecs)

GUITAR GANGSTERS – "Razor Cuts: Best Of" CD
One of the most seriously overlooked and underrated UK bands, GUITAR GANGSTERS have been knocking out their brand of catchy melodic punk for over two decades. One part COCK SPARRER, one part CHORDS/SECRET AFFAIR mod revival, and even a touch of late-'80s MEGA CITY FOUR pop. It's all pretty great, showing how consistent these boys have been, but the best songs like "That's When The Razor Cuts" are absolute pop genius. One of the best CDs I've reviewed… (TB)
(Captain Oi!, www.captainoi.com)

THE HEARTBURNS – "Fixin' to Die" LP
I must admit that I was expecting the BOMBSHELL ROCKS or WASTED (from the fact that they're from Scandinavia, their picture, and the record label) when I went to listen to this Finnish group's record—but instead was hit upside the head with some non-stop, up-tempo, hi-octane garage-y punk a la early HIVES and *Welfare Problem*-era RANDY. Fast, tight, and hard, and at times it gets heavy enough to earn TURBONEGRO comparisons—this is pretty great. (AD)
(Combat Rock, PO Box 65, 11101 Riihimaki, FINLAND)

HELLACAUST / MUDLARK – split EP
HELLACAUST starts off on the "H" side. Sounds like VENOM and NUNSLAUGHTER trading cum loads while carving 666 in each other's backs, while the dude





who did the first two CARCASS record covers video tapes the whole event. Horns up!!! Now for the "M" side…MUDLARK starts off with a slow dirge then ends with a blast-beat shit-storm. Despite the horrible artwork, this is a pretty good EP. Pick it up if you can find it. (JH)
(La Klika, c/o Hellacaust, 13 Carlisle Dr., Dartmouth, NS, B2V-1V7, CANADA)

THE HELPER MONKEYS – CD

From Sacto, this is decent QUEERS influenced punk. If you love this genre, then this might be for you. For me, this didn't stand out enough to hold my attention. (RL)
(Green Door, 2525 H St. #8, Sacramento, CA 95816)

HERESY – "The Final Hour" EP

Not to be confused with the English band of the same name, Detroit's HERESY was around in one form or another from the early '80s through the early '90s, though they never had anything properly released on vinyl 'til now. I'll admit to being pretty skeptical about this, especially considering it was a demo recorded 1988 (by which time a good portion of still-existing hardcore bands had gone crossover, rock, or just plain to shit), but only a few seconds into the first song I realized it totally shreds. Pummeling hardcore in the DISCHARGE school, but with an intensity and drive reminiscent of the Finnish greats. Chalk this EP up alongside DIATRIBE's in the raging early US D-beat demos category. The packaging includes liner notes, lyrics, and plenty of old photos and flyers. Aside from the beyond lame "ad" for the record itself on the back cover ("DISCHARGE and RIISTETYT fans take note: This may be one of the best bands you have never heard"—what, do you have to name-drop other bands on your own record's artwork to push sales or something?), my only real complaint is with the dude who wrote the liner notes bagging on current bands for "not pioneering into unknown territories" and claiming punk from HERESY's generation was "so much more brutal and inspired." Don't get me wrong, I love '80s hardcore as much as (if not more than) the next guy and I dig this record, but I can think of a dozen bands off the top of my head from the last several years more "inspired" than HERESY, who, while quite good, were hardly "pioneering" any "unknown territories"—simply playing a variation of an already-established style of punk. Whatever… Anyway, this is limited to 500 copies and well worth checking out, so act fast. (CS)
(Outcast, www.myspace.com/heresyus)

HIROSHIMA ROCKS AROUND – "Raw Aids/The Matter of Facts"

This isn't the best thing in the world, but it's presumably one of the better bands from Italy. "Raw Aids" has only two parts to the song. The main part is catchy and one could even dance to the beat. The guitars and backup vocals are simple and repetitive with the lead vocals being the only thing that alters during the "verse." Then the fuzz box is stepped on and the singer screams a couple of words that would fill in the place where a chorus would be. The B-side is a little stranger, with noise and electronics; normally that would be my type of thing but it isn't quite as catchy as "Raw Aids." (MU)
(S-S, 1114 21st St, Sacramento, CA 95811, www.s-srecords.com)

HIT ME BACK – "The Man with Many Faces" EP

Strange to think that this sort of stuff almost sounds like a blast from the past, when it seems like only yesterday bands like HIT ME BACK were takin' the scene by storm. I'm talking about a straight-up Y2K thrash assault in the vein of LIFE'S HALT or SCHOLASTIC DETH. Although I enjoyed some of the earlier EPs by this LA-based band, there's not much on this new record that really jumps out and…er…hits me. It's good, though just not mind-blowing. The lyrics on this EP range mostly on the personal, but there's also a song about the endless cycle of gang violence in LA neighborhoods. I'm not sure why they chose to put these four songs on a one-sided 12" instead of a 7", but the vinyl is a swirled grey and looks cool. Good stuff, but recommended only for fans of the genre. (BG)
(Cubicle, PO Box 911373, Los Angeles, CA 90091)

HOLY SHIT! / TURD HUNGRY CHRIST – split EP

All the best band names have been taken, leaving us with a split between HOLY SHIT! and TURD HUNGRY CHRIST. As for the music, it's good to know that some folks out there still write idea-packed, frantic punk tunes. HOLY SHIT! pulls off the wild, falling-apart hardcore style way better than most…maybe it has something to do with the warm beer that they're pulling outta those Milwaukee brewery dumpsters. This is my favorite stuff that I've heard by 'em (although I guess it was recorded over four years ago)—the raw, blender-based production suits them well, as does the NEOS cover. The sudden tempo changes and random instrument dropouts make this fun to listen to and the vocalist also does his part to add to the mayhem. TURD HUNGRY CHRIST comes off as bunch of Southern eccentrics. Their playing is somewhat rudimentary (at times, the drums are a mess) and their overall sound is bright, but their vibe is affected, disturbed, and ugly. Comparisons are a copout, but TURD HUNGRY CHRIST reminds me of a more hardcore version of *Land of the Lost*-era FREEZE with the weirdness-factor slightly amplified. This split is one of the rare occasions where both bands offer quality material and manage to compliment each other. (CI)
(Scattered, Smothered, and Covered, 184 Rogers St. NE #301, Atlanta, GA 30317)

HOT CHA CHA – "Rifle, I Knew You Were Just a Pistol" CD

Total '90s. Somehow this is somewhere in between SONIC YOUTH and STONE TEMPLE PILOTS, which is kind of a weird place. Does that even make sense? I'll explain more… Some of the guitar parts and drum parts are reminiscent of SONIC YOUTH, but somehow it has this irritating edge where I keep thinking STONE TEMPLE PILOTS and a tinge of ARCHERS OF LOAF-style '90s indie music. I get really picky about vocals, and I'm not really digging these. It's just kind of frustrating because it's almost what I want but it somehow fails miserably. I mean, I really like an embarrassing amount of '90s music, and this is *sooooo* '90s…but, yeah. I almost feel like they're trying too hard to sound like their influences, and that always sounds bad. (MM)
(Exit Stencil, www.exitstencil.org)

HOUR OF THE WOLF / LEWD ACTS – split CD

The young men of HOUR OF THE WOLF are having an identity crisis. These modern hardcore boys have decided to *progress* and play post-grunge while still pawing at their Victory/Rev/Bridge Nine roots. There is no hint of punk anywhere to be heard in these three songs. Worst rock-dude vocals. I'm convinced that someone was torturing me during the six minutes I was listening to this, but I also felt overcome by apathy. Such a range of emotions for a blah bro band. Next, please... LEWD ACTS is a little more aggro and they thankfully sound like they've heard punk before. The vocals are shredded and raw, making them more angry-dude than rock—still bro-like but at least he's pissed. LEWD ACTS compliment their professional recording and metal guitars with off-time, technical parts. Think Rev-core meets math-rock. Music like this is off of my radar, but one of the LEWD ACTS songs reminds me of RORSCHACH, so I don't mind 'em. (CI)
(Think Fast, www.thinkfastrecords.com)

HUMAN MESS – "Uncaged Animal" EP

Lo-fi, fast punk out of Bakersfield, CA. Not a bad record, just wishing they would have kicked this fucker in the ass and given up a little more drive and intensity. Overall, it sits in mid-paced territory and loses by staying just

there. Best thing about this record is seeing Steven without a shirt…send me a poster! (MS)
(No Way, Idlewood Ave, Richmond, VA 23221, www.nowayrecords.com)

ICON GALLERY – "Declination/No More"

Right off the bat, this record sounded really well recorded, falling into the sweet spot of power pop and punk rock. Looking a bit closer, I see that this Pittsburg four-piece has some history. Singer Chani handled vocal duties for the short-lived band APHASIA, but her voice in ICON GALLERY is way more prominent and less eclectic with positive effect. This band is very driving, creating a definitive path without reminding me of too many other bands' sound or even imagery. The songs have a natural rhythm that lend themselves easily to the vocals and really heighten the dramatic climaxes of her vocal range. This is a really good two-song 7" that leaves me excited to hear what will come next. (WK)
(Dear Skull, dearskull@gmail.com)

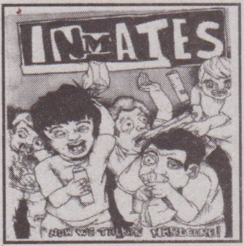
IGNI ET FERRO – "Amor Fati" LP

Chug chug chug, then more chugga chugga, then lots of songs about drinking, or at least it seems. I'm being a bit harsh, as I do like this LP. Heavy hardcore with metal and metalcore leanings. The best part is the dual female vocalists—they are relentless in pummeling you with trade-off words. Most of the lyrics are in Finnish, but if you understand the language, they seem screamed in a way that you can understand. The music is heavy and leans more towards metal than hardcore. One minute you think they are some simple straight edge band, and the next they are playing fast metalcore. There is something unique about this band's sound that I can't place. (MH)
(Tuska & Ahdistus, www.elisanet.fi/tuskajaahdistus)

INFECT– "Complete Discography 1998-2000" CD

An all-girl Y2K thrash band from Brazil. It's pretty raging and cool and, um, epic? (45 songs!) There are liner notes which talk about the frustration resulting from the fact that just as they were figuring out how to get the sound they actually wanted, they broke up. The lyrics are in Portuguese and are translated into English and cover straight edge, vegetarianism, class issues, abortion rights, international hardcore, and other, more personal themes. "Masculine society/Cultivating itself/Through the action of limitation/In order to assert yourself you must seduce, provoke jealousy, use your body." The lyrics are insightful and non-generic and raise the band over most of their contemporaries. This is just a really cool package—the sound is really an of-the-moment style, it's true, and maybe I am biased in a way I wouldn't be if this was an all-dude band, but I wish I had seen these ladies play. If only to break up the monotony of the bandana/end-of-the-spock haircut. Includes lots of practice tapes, demos, an INSTED cover, and a RESTOS DE NADA one, too. Worth checkin' out, for sure. (LG)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

INMATES – "Now We Talking Hardcore" EP



This six-song ripper is the first from these Clevo HC fanatics since the *Assholes Unanimous* LP that was originally released in 2002. They don't stray too far from the LP: fast, heavy hardcore a la early AGNOSTIC FRONT and Japan's almighty BASTARD. If you know what they sound like, then, like me, you are probably excited for this new release and have been trying to hunt it down since you heard about it. If you are not yet a convert—it's got heavy riffs, with screamed venom-laced vocals and sentiment, played by members of NINE SHOCKS TERROR, DARVOCETS, GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, CRUNKY KIDS, H100s, and I'm sure a dozen more. This review does not do the record justice, but then again, how do you describe an angel? Totally, unequivocally recommended! (VL)
(Even Worse, Saenredamstraat 44-2, 1072 CH Amsterdam, HOLLAND)

INSOMNIO – "Walking on the String" EP

This new EP from Spain's INSOMNIO rules. Four songs of catchy, driving hardcore punk with hoarse, snotty vocals and a swaggering hard-rock influence. With more metallic production, this could sound like MOTÖRHEAD—I'm not kidding. As it is, the recordings are raw and immediate (they recorded these tracks by themselves in the practice room, and I don't see how they could have captured them better). Top-notch. (AM)
(No Way, Idlewood Ave, Richmond, VA 23221, www.nowayrecords.com)

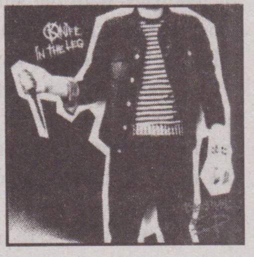
INSTANT AGONY – "Exploitation" CD

This Liverpool-area band's first single came out in 1982 and, to my knowledge, over the course of their long and spotty career, this is their first full-length album. Fifteen tracks of no-frills, fast, shout-along punk rock. They've been at the game long enough to know how to put together a song and actually sound better when they slow it down a bit—see the mid-paced anthem "Show Some Respect" for what I'm talking about. INSTANT AGONY has been hammering away for years and hasn't ever received the recognition of some of their peers, but they've stuck at it anyway, which is admirable. (AM)
(Be Afraid, PO Box 11, Upton Wirral, CH49 4RR, UNITED KINGDOM, www.instantagony.co.uk)

JACUZZI BOYS – "Ghost Ghost" EP

I guess THE BLACK LIPS are the unavoidable quick 'n' facile sonic cross-reference to this sort of cryptic psych-folk-punk, so there you have it. The production is low-key but a little too controlled, given the "recorded at 3:00 A.M." feel of these songs. Nice, but needs a little bit more Ingredient X (or fairy dust, to use the TROGGS' terminology). (DD)
(Florida's Dying, www.floridadying.com)

THE JAMMY DODGERS – "Skive Off" CD



Holy shit, where did this record come from? This fucking rules! If you take the best parts from early Lookout! Records and the best parts of Plan-It-X Records and put them together, you have this band. Like combining BLACK FORK, BLATZ, and THE BANANAS. Killer lyrics, both in content and delivery. Kick-ass samples between songs, too. This record is amazing. If you like THE BANANAS, this CD will make you shit your pants. (FS)
(Rock-It, PO Box 14001, Gainesville, FL 32604)

THE JONESES – "Criminals" LP

A reissue of the 1983 six-song EP from this Southern California band. It's a crude mixture of glam rock, rockabilly, and hair metal. A couple of the songs, "Criminals" and "Fix Me," are rockin' in a NEW YORK DOLLS and HEARTBREAKERS way. But I never need to hear their version (or any version) of "Crocodile Rock" ever again. (CK)

(Full Breach Kicks, 2060 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, www.fullbreach77.com)

KAIBOUSHITSU – "Dokuro Dokuro Dokuro" CD

Where to start with this one? According to my sources, KAIBOUSHITSU means "autopsy room," and *Dokuro* is "skull." The logo for Japanese psychedelic outfit DEATH COMES ALONG, which is lead by Crow, vocalist of the legendary Japanese hardcore band CROW, is on the OBI strip, and I think it's him singing but am unsure. Anyhow, seven songs that range from slower and spooky sounding to fast HC tracks with guitar noodling that actually reminds me of CROW's guitarist. So maybe that dude is involved as well. I have heard the description being thrown around and I think it's true, but only for the slower songs; indeed, they remind me of the early-'80s, Japanese punk, ADK-style bands, specifically MASTURBATION. (Note: ADK was an early Japanese punk label known for releasing weird [think tribal drumming] and dark [think post-punk] records.) The singer even makes weird puking and grunting noises like the singer of MASTURBATION. The sixth song is more straightforward, rocking, and I think someone else sings. This guy is more nasally a la the singer of ABURADAKO, another quirky ADK band. Last song is heavy and drone-y with the singer (I think we're back to Crow) screaming, grunting, shouting, and the guitarist soloing incessantly. Fuck, this is a workout. It ends in a mess of feedback with the singer repeating himself. On first listen I was disappointed, but now I'm thinking it's a keeper. The only thing that I wish was different is the production. It's real bright and clear where I think a less-sophisticated or murky recording would add to the *ambiance* of the songs. Recommended, but not for the weak. (VL)

(H:G Fact, www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact/)

KILLER'S KISS – "Abused/Mondo Jobless"

It took me quite a long time to warm up to KILLER'S KISS, but I eventually came around, coincidentally around the time their recordings hit the streets. This two-year-old single, like their others, is jam-packed full of sound: omni-present keys, pounding drums, fuzz, and howls. The songs themselves don't overtly rely on gimmick or noise, yet they still seem busy/buzzing. Perhaps they're just well put together??? Yeah. Clearly influenced by the darker, driving, dirtier elements of classic Aussie punk and the Crypt/In The Red schools of raw, and likely to please fans of either. (MC)

(Rehab, www.rehab-records.com)

KNIFE IN THE LEG – "Bloodlust" EP

I had to do a double to make sure this lot weren't from Sweden (they are Polish), as they sound just like the REGULATIONS/E.T.A. So, what you have is snotty West Coast hardcore like *First Four Years* BLACK FLAG, CIRCLE JERKS, etc. filtered through Sweden onto Poland! The lyrics are better formed than some of the clichés coming out of the Swedish lot, but the vibes are a blueprint. This is super tight, catchy, and fuckin' *ripping*. If you dig the current No Way/Grave Mistake crop, check this out for your new favorite band. (TB)

(Trujaca Fala, www.trujacafala.com)

KNUCKLEHEAD – "Lost" CD

OK, no fucking around. *Buy this CD now!* If GAUZE died, Sapporo's KNUCKLEHEAD would be the second coming. Ten solid tracks that lay down an ass-whooping like the one(s) you used to get from your black mama. Everything is in Japanese, but the intensity translates internationality. H:G Fact is one of the top labels for quality Japanese hardcore punk and this release in no way disputes that. I think this is the last will and testament of this awesome band, but regardless…seriously, you have to check this out. *Fucking amazing*. (JH)

(H:G Fact, www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact)

KULTURKAMPF – "Existence" EP

Four tracks of basic, double-bass-driven, mid-tempo-to-fast crust with either yelped and shouted or gurgling grind vocals and an occasional full grindcore tempo. The lyrics are appropriation of common punk themes but are copies of copies, and at this point, make no sense—fantasies about trench warfare and religious war connection to the GI Bill?? Why the originators of this style were relevant, meaningful, and worth listening to was the fact that the young kids who made that original punk music could at least read a newspaper and react to what was going on in the world around them, which made the music more than entertainment. No one—large bands, small bands—in this decade has really stepped up to hit the reset button on themes and ideas that punk could counter, so there's just incessant and increasingly irrelevant recycling... On the flipside, however, the track "Shoved Down Your Throat," an attack on big business and marketing, is relevant as ever. Just taken as entertainment, this is a fun listen, riffing off various types of metallic hardcore, banged out with vigor, and ending with a spirited cover of AUS ROTTEN's "Fuck Nazi Sympathy." Limited to 300. (KS)

(Trench Rot, www.myspace.com/uptheboner-punx)

KUNG FU MONKEYS – "Christmas for Breakfast" CD

A singles and rarities comp spanning 1996-2008, this rocks the nerd-punk house! I've always liked these guys. With a vocalist who almost sounds like a gal singer, this reminds me now of THE UNLOVEABLES and a twee HI-FIVES. 41 tracks here that cover the crucial issues like "I Miss The Ramones" and "Somebody Put Something in My Ovaltine." A must for fans. (RL)

(Whoa-Oh, www.whoahohrecords.com)

LET'S DANCE – "Summer Breeze" EP

This is the first record that I've ever seen that has 3-D cover art, a 3-D inner sleeve, and comes with a pair of 3-D glasses, and it comes on clear, splatter-colored vinyl, so, top marks for presentation. The music is mid-tempo pub-rock meets power-pop, done with a nice, rough-and-ready street feel, not unlike THE EXPLODING HEARTS. I assume these cats are from Canada—there's been a lot of bands similar to this makin' noise up there lately, and if you know what I mean, I recommend this to you. The A-side wouldn't sound that out of place on one of those *Powerpearls* or *Shake Some Action!* comps. They round things off with a good cover of the SEX PISTOLS' "Bodies." Nice. (AD)

(Longshot, 980 Harrison St., San Francisco, CA 94107, www.longshotrecords.com)

LIBYANS – "Welcome to the Neighborhood" EP

Nice three-song debut of solid (if not exceptional) punk rock from this Boston band. The title track, which deals with the topic of gentrification, is a mid-tempo number with a chorus vaguely reminiscent of THE AVENGERS' "Cheap Tragedies"; the two on the B-side are faster, more straightforward hardcore, with "Higher Standards" being my favorite on this EP. I recommend checking this out if you've liked some of the stuff coming out of Massachusetts recently, such as SOCIAL CIRCKLE, CONVERSIONS, etc. (CS)

(Shock to the System, thelibyans@gmail.com)

MAX·LEVINE ENSEMBLE – "OK Smarty Pants" CD

This occupies a space somewhere between DELAY and GHOST MICE, maybe more in vibe than in sound. I'm enjoying the music, with the exception of a couple ska riffs. It's straight up, well-played pop punk.

Occasionally, the vocal tone or delivery ventures a little too far into a sort of wide-eyed pious fidelity that reminds me a little of evangelical Christians. Sometimes it's so catchy, I don't mind. It's relatively easy on the ears, but personally I wouldn't mind hearing a little more of the quirkiness of a MILKY WIMPSHAKE. This should appeal to people digging the stuff on Plan-It-X like DELAY or DEFIANCE, OHIO, or fans of pop punk like FOR SCIENCE or THE STEINWAYS. Track four, "Aren't All Songs Political..." is a hit. This is a solid full-length. (P$)
(Plan-It-X, PO Box 14001, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.plan-it-x.com)

MEANWHILE – "Reality or Nothing" LP

Get out your torches and stones for this one, but I would rather listen to MEANWHILE than DISCHARGE any day. After I don't really know how many great EPs and full-lengths, the almighty MEANWHILE returns with a brand new LP of mammoth proportions. Most bands doing the DIS-whatever thing lack the power and anger necessary to avoid coming off sounding flat and *boorrri-iiinnnggg*, but this Swedish powerhouse has always been at the front of the pack, doing this shit right. This time with more intensity and aggression than I recall from any of *their* previous outings, adding more leads and inventive riffs yet keeping with the verse, chorus, verse, chorus tradition of the DIS-thang. And a perfect recording, to boot. This shit is the apex of all that is D-beat hardcore, and tough as fucking nails. (JU)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

MEANWHILE – "Remaining Right: Silence" LP

I was 13 years old when I first heard a band called DISCHANGE who skewed my perception of what a Swedish D-beat band should sound like. The DISCHANGE album *Seeing Feeling Bleeding* was as full and brutal as any metal record but with punk anger and that raw sound of pain and anguish that captured all my adolescent feelings. They provided the soundtrack to the summer that led to my freshman year of high school and many rotten beer soaked parties and road trips to the city to see a multitude of raging punk shows. The songs "Victims of Madness" and "After-War Scars" are epics beyond compare and although DISCHANGE changed their name soon thereafter to MEANWHILE, they contain the exact same lineup and same sound. MEANWHILE is brutal, stripped-down punk with nothing other than a solid-as-hell beat and hook after hook of guttural distortion, topped off with ragged vocals, which are discernable and easily set them apart from the millions of generic bands who play the same style. This is the 1993 follow-up to the aforementioned DISCHANGE album and is no less sharp and on-point. These folks have been in many other bands over the years that are very well known, and it is high time MEANWHILE was shown the same respect. This record comes in the highest quality packaging with all the lyrics, and in my opinion is one of the finest representations of Swedish punk available. (WK)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

MEANWHILE – "The Road to Hell" LP

I don't think it would be fair to write a review of MEANWHILE without mentioning DISCHARGE. MEANWHILE never falls away from the D-beat blueprint, but they play this style with obvious passion and authority. Time was spent on these riffs and *The Road to Hell* is a hook-filled masterpiece—every song stands out in its own way. Very few punk bands write music as powerful and perfect as "The Iconic War." It's a stomping anthem worthy of at least 40 couch dives in its one minute and thirty seconds. Actually, *The Road to Hell* contains more punchy mid-tempo tunes than any of the other MEANWHILE LPs, which is a major bonus for me. I consider all of the MEANWHILE records that were just (re)released on Feral Ward to be necessary purchases, but I think *The Road to Hell* (which originally came out in 1999) is a good option for those just looking to test the waters. (CI)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

MEHKAHO N.T. – CD

Five songs on this CD of some tough, raw hardcore, reminiscent of old-school US hardcore meets some grind and sludge influences. Certainly has an '80s vibe, but is updated for those of the more grind-y persuasion. Must hear more! (NM)
(self-released, www.mehkagont.com)

MENTHOLS – "848/Hey Hey Hey"

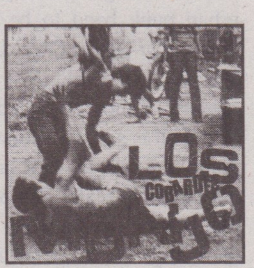
I am very amused by this. It is the same song on both sides, but with different lyrics. What a concept. Are you paying attention? It's either a test for the listeners or a big "fuck you." Either way, MENTHOLS have just made me their biggest fan. It also helps that the music is very cool. It's catchy, fun garage punk with a unique vocalist. He sounds a bit flat, but in a very interesting way. Great stuff. (CK)
(Florida's Dying, www.floridasdying.com)

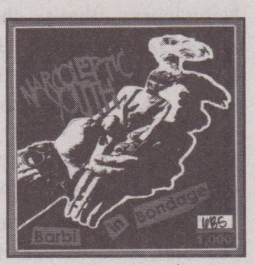
MOME RATHS – "Vaporized My Brain" CD

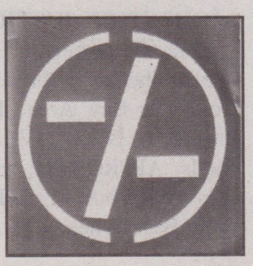
These days, a large portion of *budget rock* wannabes get the whitewash treatment, and end up sounding too slick and polished, too limp and energy-less, and like loser bar rock. The MOME RATHS do not fall into that trap. The out-of-tune harmonies and home recordings of the husband/wife team (complete with some back-ups done by some youngster friends) are refreshing; they might be a little sugar-pop-pop sounding for my taste, but they've got the right idea going. Songs I'm sure the fam is happy to play for their young set of friends. This CD contains cute sing-alongs about werewolves, riding Vespas, how cool MacGyver is, ninjas, and soda. (AL)
(self-released, no address)

LOS MONJO – "Cobardes/La Peor Pesadilla"

LOS MONJO is comprised of four young-ish brothers/cousins from Guadalajara, Mexico who have honed in on the gloomy-yet-tuneful style of punk. Their sound is reminiscent of Spanish punk of yore, and they've managed to retain the raw, reckless feel of that era/region. LOS MONJO's rhythm section is largely responsible for the immediate, grim atmosphere. The basslines are of the dark, viral, stick-in-your-head variety. The vocalist ably feeds the anxious vibe as well. Midway through "Cobardes" we are







treated to a desperate howl into a guitar solo that couldn't be more perfect. This is sure to remain a staple in my summer time listening pile, and I highly suggest checking your favorite distro for a copy, stat. (CI)
(No Options, PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623, www.noptionsrecords.com)

MUDLARKS – CD

Curious. Sounds something like THE GORIES at their more produced with a polished femme singer and a fair amount of rawk thrown in, though there are some kinda nice pop touches from time to time. A solid effort that doesn't quite coalesce to these ears. (DD)
(Puke 'n' Vomit, PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834, www.pukenvomitrecords.com)

NARCOLEPTIC YOUTH – "Barbi in Bondage" EP

A four-songer of everything you expect a suburban punk band to be in the post-UNSEEN, post-major-label-SOCIAL DISTORTION, post-Warped Tour world. Not that it sounds anything like any of those, but elements of all are present. When all is said and done, this is just punk rock, plain and simple—not hardcore, not pop-punk, not anything really. It's pretty snotty but I think this record would really benefit from a rawer recording. *Barbi in Bondage* was apparently released in 1999 and this here is a limited repress with a secret bonus track that I won't spoil. Narcolepsy; that's the one where you zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz… (JU)
(Dr. Strange, PO Box 1058, Alta Loma, CA 91701, www.drstrange.com)

NETJAJEV SOCIETY SYSTEM – "Aerialite 3000 BC" EP

This is my new favorite band. Fucked up and beautiful. A clusterfuck of space rock weirdness, electro punk, and new wave grind. Like watching a Tim Burton movie with THE LOCUST, MAN…OR ASTROMAN?, and maybe BONE AWL playing the soundtrack. And all this from just one guy. This is my introduction to this awesome project, and I've heard all NETJAJEV S.S. records are different from one to the other. So I guess the best thing to do is to check them all out. Magnus, you are a badass dude. (JH)
(Rescued From Life, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76117, www.myspace.com/netjajevsocietysystem)

NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE – LP

From the bowels of Half Moon Bay comes one of the better hardcore bands to emerge from the Bay Area. Full-throttle hardcore inspired by NEGATIVE FX and other negative bands...APPROACH, even… Solid production, great cover, boss disc. (TB)
(Way Back When, www.waybackwhen.com)

NO NO ZERO – "Rough Stuff" CD

I was about to give Toronto's NO NO ZERO a "not feeling it" review, when the song "Driven to Extremes" stopped me short with its over-the-top sonic rock sound similar to that of the LEE HARVEY OSWALD BAND. However, overall it's mainly a mix between the dumbed-down lyrical ideas behind some of the *budget rock* greats, as I'm pretty sure the entire album is about fucking, and some of those too-big-for-their-own-good riffs from foreign monster garage rock bands of the late '90s. Some of it catches you, but mostly there is not a lot here. (AL)
(Signed by Force, www.signedbyforce.com)

THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE – "State of Ohio" CD

This Dayton, OH band's first album boasts fifteen tracks of atmospheric, semi-psychedelic garage punk. It's a pretty bare-bones record: thickly distorted riffs conceal buried chiming melodies that bring to mind THE WIPERS more than any Midwestern comparison. Although this just came out, it quite easily could have been an unearthed relic from the early '80s. My only complaint is that this could perhaps have used some editing—not every song is on par with the others, and an album of just the ten strongest tracks might deliver a more consistent and solid impact. (AM)
(False Profit, thenorthwestordinance@yahoo.com)

THE NYMPHETS – "Feels Like Motherfuckers/Bekki-Anne"

I'm a big fan of melodic punk rock that blurs the line between punk and pop and this is right up that alley. It's faster paced and it's a little herky-jerky at times, but it's still very poppy, with a few "oh, oh, ohs." And there is a song about a girl, which is always a good topic for a song. Good shit. (KK)
(Psychic Handshake, 982 Sainte-Marguerite, Montreal, CANADA, H4C 2X8)

THE OKMONIKS – "Party Fever!!!" LP

Years/beers in the making, Arizona's OKMONIKS have unleashed their long-threatened long-player to an unsuspecting, uninspired, and uncaring public. 'Cept for me, as I've been holding my breath for, what, four years? Count me as one of the last surviving souls who can still listen to a MUMMIES or LES SEXAREENOS record and experience pure glee, and that same feeling translates to this pup. Farfisa-blown, semi-inept, totally overdone…yet I can't look away. Curse you OKMONIKS, you've forced me to have fun! (MC)
(Slovenly, www.slovenly.com)

ON FIRE – "Masquerades" CD

Just when I thought I've heard the worst, something like this comes along and changes your whole view on things. This is an overproduced pile of garbage. The music is the most cliché punk I've heard in a while and sounds like if PENNYWISE tried to write hardcore, and even that's being generous. (PL)
(Shield, www.theshieldhardcore.com)

ONLY HUMAN – "Critical Mass" CD

These days, there are so many CDs around that something really has to shine to stand out. While this CD is not *bad*, it's pretty faceless. Imagine a more street punk PENNYWISE, or a more Warped Tour VIRUS, but with clichéd lyrics about tyranny and the pigs. Not my thing. (TB)
(Felony, www.myspace.com/felonyrecordsorg)

PERVERSE OSMOSIS – "Swarm, Kobold, Swarm" EP

I sure am glad they assigned me this record to review, 'cause I think the lyrical content would be lost on most other reviewers. Well, over half of their songs are Dungeons and Dragons references. Possibly even more, 'cause it's very apparent that these guys are way more advanced than I in the role-playing realm. A lot of their subject matter went totally over my head. But it's not exclusively a D 'n' D band—they also have songs about vampires and circle pits. I should also mention that this is a keyboard-driven trash band from Baltimore. So, in the right setting, they could create a gnarly circle pit. Still, the guys are dorks. Serious dorks. The kind of dorks that would plan their tour so that they could be in San Diego for Comic-Con. I could compare they guys to STRIPMALL SEIZURES but without the drug-addled insanity, and instead, an over-caffeinated Mountain Dew freak-out. I can even see a slight DEAD KENNEDYS influence, even though they don't sound anything like them. Musically, these guys are pretty average, but they were able to put keyboards into a trash band without sounding really horrible. Which is no easy feat, my friends. All in all, I liked the record, and I bet they put on a killer live show. (FS)
(self-released, www.perverseosmosis.com)

PIERCED ARROWS – "Straight To The Heart" LP

Fred Cole, Toody Cole, and Kelly Halliburton open up this rock 'n' roll opus with "Gods Of Thunder," and proceed to blow your mind with "Black Rainbow." You old-time punks are well aware that Fred and Toody Cole from DEAD MOON are among the most revered pioneers of the garage punk scene! The next song, "In My Brain," is a vehicle for Mr. Fred Cole's angst-ridden misery and his bleak festivities! The feedback is appropriate for a psych/punk classic of

this caliber!! We plow through "Walking Wounded" and "Shades." Fucking brilliant! Side two opens with a spirited opus, "Frankenstein," where Mr. Cole gives off fucking sparks! Song two on side-B is "The Wait." This ballad will reduce your heart to so much useless protoplasm! The heartfelt lyrics that Fred and Toody exchange in this song will leave you crying for your lost lover! In "The Wait," Fred sings: "You were on the wings of time, a victim of the crowd / you and I would never be the ones to scatter 'neath the sky… / Desperately I'd search the why, for making those mistakes / Baby I was wrong to leave, I still don't know why / Maybe in the end we'll cease against a broken sky…" Fuck yes! Fucking Fred Cole is the poet-laureat of the USA!! Toody kicks a whole lot of punk rock butt on the new song also available on the single, "Caroline." This shit gives off sparks and will remain a modern classic!!!! No other punk/garage chanteuse could cause this much discomfort in the rock community! In "Caroline," Toody sings: "I was on the dark side, you were in the sun / you had all the answers, I had none… / Never had direction, how the wind would blow / Caught up in the chaos of the undertow…" Fucking brilliant! Steam through song four, "C-U," and song five, "Up On A Cloud," and you get the rock 'n' roll masterpiece, "Lost," with the refrain, "Where Did They Go." This is a heartbreaking reality check for all the rockers that have lived through the battles and the carnage of the rock 'n' roll trenches. This is a brilliant assessment of the frivolous rock loyalties exhibited by the shallow fucks in the garage rock culture. The cynicism of "Where Did They Go" is nicely contrasted with "Where Are They Now," by COCK SPARRER. Fucking brilliant! The record is finished up with "Hills On Fire." This is another masterpiece from Fred and Toody Cole! Write to: (BR)

(Tombstone, PO Box 1463 Clackamas, OR 97015)

PROTESTANT – "The Hate The Hollow" LP

Tungsten-heavy burliness from Milwaukee, churning and blasting at a throttling, full-drum-driven speed, with harshly-spat, raw vocals a la the HIS HERO IS GONE/FROM ASHES RISE school. It's mired in similar bleak and dark moodiness but with considerably more metallic bent and flourishes. There are melodic threads throughout the music, but the songs emanate from more of the cornered, blast-beat school of beat-you-over-the-head hardcore than they rely on "songs," despite the quiet, near-instrumental intros that occur before it breaks back into chaotic pummeling. Nicely packaged, with dark lyrics of personal vision making for a crushing nine-song debut LP. (KS)

(Halo of Flies, 430 E. Lloyd St., Milwaukee, WI 53212, www.myspace.com/halooffliesrcds)

PTERODACDUDES / SHRED SAVAGE – split EP

This record is a slight letdown, 'cause the PTERODACDUDES side does them absolutely no justice. I mean, it sounds good and all, but they are way better live. First time I saw them was at a Geekfest at Apgar house two years ago and they totally stole the show, which is impressive since there were like 30 bands playing that day. They have come up to the Bay Area a few times since then and they always put on a killer show. The record seemed a bit too slow and lacked the energy that makes them so good live. You should totally check these guys out. SHRED SAVAGE plays a style very similar to PTERODACDUDES, and both bands take a lot of influence from their local Anaheim counterparts KILLER DREAMER and DRINKERS PURGITORY. I wouldn't be surprised if they share band members between all four of the above-mentioned bands. This is a good record; I owned it before I got it for review and still listen to it from time to time. (FS)

(Small Pool, 1806 W. Santa Ana St., Anaheim, CA 92805, www.smallpoolrecords.com)

RESOLVE – "Break Free" EP

Fucking awesome! This is the perfect illustration of what straight edge hardcore can and should be. The music is heated, fast, and powerful, with lots of crunching guitar and pounding drums that seriously will make you want to do a full-out swinging karate kick in your living room and scare the shit out of your cat. Think STRAIGHT AHEAD, early JUDGE, and PROJECT X. But the best part about this is the lyrics, since they don't descend down the lame and generic "stabbed in the back" or whatever bullshit avenue that most straight edge bands follow. The songs on this EP deal with the environment, religion in schools, how corporations control people, etc. Alright, there are still a couple of "make the most" and "still believe" themes, but they're executed just right. Absolutely recommended for fans of the above-mentioned bands and current gods like HOODS UP and BIRDS OF A FEATHER (all on this great label). (BG)

(Commitment, Klein Muiden 38, 1939 RL Nigtevecht, NETHERLANDS, www.commitmentrecords.nl)

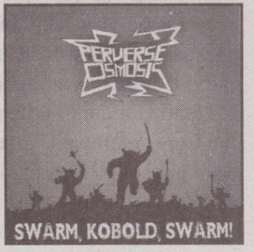
RIBZY – "Untitled Evil" EP

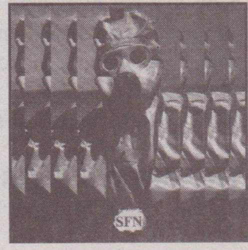
When I first dropped the needle I was surprised—'80s hardcore punk? My first thought was, "Is this the same band that had a track on the *MRR* comp *Not So Quiet on the Western Front* back in the early-'80s?" Sure enough, same band. I looked quick and it says the tracks were recorded in 2003 and 2006. This band started around 1981 and were one of the first hardcore bands from San Jose, California along with THE FACTION and UNAWARE. RIBZY reformed a few years ago, and around the time these tracks were recorded—they are supposedly tracks that the band used to play live but either never released or were released on cassettes and have been re-recorded for this release. Good stuff. (MH)

(Vinehell, PO Box 36131, San Jose, CA 95158, www.vinehell.com)

SACRED SHOCK – "For a Living" EP

At this moment in time, SACRED SHOCK is one of my favorite bands going. They're perfect and their songwriting flawlessly combines just the right elements of everything I love about all different arenas of hardcore. The two things that really hold SACRED SHOCK *über alles* are the vocals and the guitar leads. Obviously, they'd be nothing without their killer rhythm section, but Alex has the only voice in hardcore that can pull off singing actual melodies while still sounding as fucking pissed and as tough as he does. On the surface, SACRED SHOCK definitely have a lot of the elements of the classic '82 USA sound, but every corner of this record has that per-





fect hook that makes you want to listen over, and over, and over, ad infinitum. "Planet Decay," song of the year thus far. I'd say this is a perfect record, and since I hate everything, that's a huge compliment! (JU)
(Schizophrenic, www.schizophrenicrex.com)

SEE YOU IN HELL – "2003-2007" CD
This is the discography (so far) of Czech band SEE YOU IN HELL. The CD format works well for easy access to the band's four separate vinyl works, but I kind of hate CDs packaged as EPs. SEE YOU IN HELL, musically, is a fast-paced hardcore band that excels in creating a dark hardcore sound with hints of Jap-core elements, mainly taking form in wanking solos. This is rough and raw punk that will satisfy the need for aggressive guitar licks and fast-paced beats. I found that the earlier songs are a little easier to digest because of the more simplistic approach. This band has been around for some time although most Americans would not have realized because they sing in a foreign language and have never made it to North America. Here is a cheap introduction to the band via the CD format. (WK)
(Not Very Nice, PO Box 2, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0002)

SEITAN – "D-Beat Hippie Lovers" CD
UNCURBED, you started it, and now you have a lot to answer for. "*D-Beat Hippie Lovers*?" "*D-BEAT HIPPIE LOVERS*???" *D-BEAT HIPPIE LOVERS*??? *D-BEAT HIPPIE LOVERS*? Wait, let me type that again: *D-BEAT HIPPIE LOVERS*. Roll it over your tongue and spit out a hairball—it's plain unacceptable. What luckily *is* acceptable is this Swedish band's kick-ass blend of D-beat hardcore with grind flourishes; fourteen tracks of largely super-charged DISCHARGE/Svensk attack hardcore, blazing with glorious distortion but topped with blown-out grind-gurgling vocals. It's amped, it's fast, it's brutal, it's distorted, and it works. Lyrics are all in Swedish, and honestly, "*D-Beat Hippie Lovers*," I don't even want to know!!! Killer! (KS)
(Inget Javal Chafs, www.profaneexistence.com)

SFN – "Demo" EP
Ten tracks of retro "powerviolence" from this Cheese State band. All the usual brutality and anger that this genre is known for. Doesn't totally knock me on my ass, but is better than most the garbage out now. I'm going to get a copy just because there are those days where you need to get drunk and break shit. And this would be a good EP to get the ball rolling. Thrash! (JH)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

THE SHITTY LIMITS – "Espionage" EP
Man. Geez. My god. Wow. While the pace isn't quite as frenetic as their first two EPs, it is every bit as punk rock. And while it's still got that MINOR THREAT feel to it, particularly on the B-side, you'll also get a little WIRE in the nose. It's not often that you find music played with the passion and sense of urgency that these guys bring. It's like an assault on the senses. These guys continue to amaze me. Put this one on after a long day at the office and you just might find yourself dancing in your living room. Hell, why not invite some friends over and have a dance party? (KK)
(Dire, www.myspace.com/diremusic)

THE SINGULARS – "Pet Sounds (For Alexia)" 2xEP
If this record will teach the world anything, it's that, no matter how terrible your band is, if you have $1000 you can have your own double-7". This record is pure dogshit. There was not a single listenable song on either the orange-colored vinyl 7" or the green-colored vinyl 7". You know how sometimes at the end of CDs, the band will throw in a secret track of them just fucking around and laughing? Well, this is an entire record of that. I guess the joke's on me; I spent 15 minutes listening to it. (FS)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/thesingulars)

SLANG – "Ill Peace Hymn/Reality Called Crucifixion"
Last I heard from SLANG, who hails from Sapporo, Japan, was the *Skilled Rhythm Kills* LP. The heaviness was too much '90s-moshcore for me and it now sits in my To Be Sold pile. Imagine my surprise when I heard side A: raging, noisy D-beat HC. Throaty vocals, not severely but adequately distorted guitar, mid-tempo breakdown that leads into a guitar solo and we're back to that main riff. Man, this is great shit. Side B is up, and what do we get? Chunky guitar riffs, slower…more like what I remember, but, it's more palatable this time around. Maybe I'm flying high from the A-side and primed for side B, but this is not too bad. Still good enough for me to suggest searching it out. (VL)
(MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN, www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr)

SLAP THE CULTURE – CD
Competently performed, early-'80s-inspired hardcore from a bunch of young Japanese thrashers. Songs about hating lame trendy people, feeling hopeless, and skating, with musical nods to MINOR THREAT, 7 SECONDS, and DYS without sounding too generic. The guitar sound is killer too. Sixteen short songs in twelve minutes that would sound totally excellent blasting from a boom-box at your backyard half-pipe jam. (AM)
(Cock Suck, nondrums@yahoo.co.jp)

SMART COPS – "Sudore A Merenda" EP
If you were into LA PIOVRA at all, check out this record. SMART COPS is the next great hardcore export from Italy and they play a kind of rock-infused hardcore that you'll want to shake your ass to as well as circle pit. Truly brilliant stuff. (PL)
(Sorry State, 1102 N. Greensboro Street, Carrboro, NC 27510, www.sorryrecords.com)

SPECTRES – "Visions of a New World/ Complications"
Either you love them or hate them—this seems to be the general attitude toward Canada's SPECTRES from the people I've talked with. They also happen to be one of my favorite current bands and this record is no letdown as a follow-up to their amazing debut. Brain's vocals are as placid as ever, which some folks have complained about. What did most people think when they listened to Ian Curtis the first time they put on a JOY DIVISION record? Most people can't relate to monotone droning vocals unless the singer is larger than life as Ian has been proported to have been. In my opinion, the vocals grow on an individual when they can relate to the singer's lyrics or persona, as many people have grown to love other bands with similar singing styles like SISTERS OF MERCY, THE MOB, or CLAN OF XYMOX. The fact is that SPECTRES are playing a style epitomized by anti-heros and elitists that never gave a shit in the first place, so I doubt they care one way or the other. If you are a fan of post-punk and goth mixed with a dash of peace punk nobility, than you are gonna eat this shit up. I think the critics will look back and realize the errors of their opinions at some point, but why don't you find out for yourselves. This single continues right where their last one left off. (WK)
(Whisper in Darkness, PO Box 40113, Portland, OR 97240-0113)

SPES EREPTA – "Minutova Terapie" CD
Man, how can I describe this? This Czech band is political vegan straight edge, but the music falls along the lines of hardcore crust like SCORCHED EARTH POLICY or maybe MISERY. The lyrics are exceptional and English translations are included in the quality insert booklet that accompanies the CD. This ten-track collection contains all the band's EP and compilation tracks from the last few years, and apparently they are now defunct. Fans of Profane Existence-core should definitely seek this out. (BG)
(Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, www.refuserecords.prv.pl)

SPLITTING HEADACHE – "The World's My Aim" EP
Damn, this is pretty good! I wasn't expecting

to like this so much when I first threw it on the turntable. I mean, I've heard of this band before, but I guess I accidentally passed them by in the slew of releases over the last few years. Wow, my loss! This new EP contains six tracks that all rip along with great lyrics and a bit of variety to keep things from sounding the same. The music falls between old-school sounds like NIHILISTICS or JFA and more modern stuff like SET TO EXPLODE. The basic message conveyed in the lyrics seems to be that life is a dead end. One song, "The Fall," talks about how trying to do the right thing in life (study, work hard, etc.) doesn't necessarily pay off. I'm feeling this cynicism and I'm digging this EP. Check it out. (BG)
(Chainsaw Safety, PO Box 260318, Bellerose, NY 11426, www.chainsawsafetyrecords.com)

STATE OF THE UNION – "To The Bitter End…A Discography" CD
Dark and atmospheric with heavy metallic overtones. Not sure if I like the vocals all that much. Higher pitch screaming puts me off a little. The earlier NEUROSIS sounds are really obvious. Especially the intros. This has all their tracks in one nice little package (hence the title of the CD). Always heard the name but glad to finally check out the music. Worth your time and trouble. (JH)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 18051, Minneapolis, MN 55418, www.profaneexistence.com)

STEAKNIVES – "We Can't Stand This World" EP
Cool four-track EP of snotty and catchy Italian punk rock that I like more and more each time I play it (four times now!). Imagine mixing the amazing Italian punk band TAXI with early-era TSOL and you have an idea of what's in store here. The lyrics tend to fall along the somewhat absurd (in a good way) '70s-punk style of "Feel Like a Dog" and "Gimme Your Brain" (two songs on this EP), but it's a load of toe-tapping, punk rock 'n' roll action that will make even the most political and serious asshole want to dance! An insert would have been nice, but other than that, I would say this is a first-rate release undeniably worth checking out. (BG)
(Zodiac Killer, www.myspace.com/zodiackillerrecords)

SUICIDE PILOTS – "The War on Satire" CD
Good mid-to-up-tempo political (anarcho) punk rock with great vocals—the first thing that sprung to mind was DEAD KENNEDYS but on second thought I think THE FIXTURES, or a less manic FLAG OF DEMOCRACY or COWBOY KILLERS would be better comparisons. You can see what I'm saying—the singer has that warble thing going on. Anyway, these guys definitely know what they're doing—the lyrics are clever, the songs contain plenty of hooks, and the whole sound, although original, harkens back to the good days when things were less colored inside the lines. This album can't be defined by rigid sub-genre guidelines, and in that respect they remind me of my current faves COBRA SKULLS. Saying all that, this packs plenty of wallop; it gets downright noisy at times, and there's rockin' riffs in no short supply. The more I listen to this the more I like it. The cover contains very little information, but I dug about online and discovered that they're from Ottawa, so we can now say that they're adding to a fine tradition of Canadian punk…or something. You can find them at their you-know-what-Space page online. I urge you to check them out. Very, very good. (AD)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/thesuicidepilots)

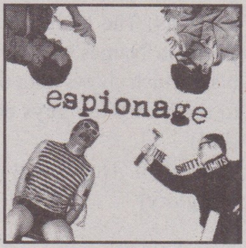
TAKE CONTROL – "Tides" EP
It seems that Commitment Records had moved on from putting out bad European straight edge bands to putting out bad American ones—this one being a typical cookie-cutter youth crew hardcore band out of Iowa, complete with epic long breakdowns and sing-alongs. This is a definite miss—boring and bland modern hardcore. (PL)
(Commitment, Klein Muiden 38, 1939 RL Nigtevecht, NETHERLANDS, www.commitmentrecords.nl)

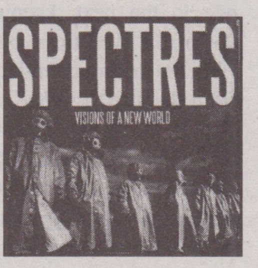
THESE HANDS ARE FISTS – "Peace Is Bad For Business" CD
Pretty solid stuff. THESE HANDS ARE FISTS are a band out of Portugal and share ex-members with bands like TIME X, NEW WINDS, and FIGHT FOR CHANGE. They have a youth crew sound that is similar to late-'90s revival bands like TEN YARD FIGHT, with more of politically conscious message. (PL)
(Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszaw 78, POLAND, www.refuserecords.prv.pl)

THIRD DEGREE – "Punk Sugar" CD
It's been a while since I've heard anything new from this Polish grindcore band. Back some time in 2005 or 2006, I picked up a full-length of their *Outstay* and loved it. Since then, the band seems to have shed their obvious middle-era NAPALM DEATH sound. Grind yes, but they also slow down and use discordance to pummel you. Add to this a few punk leanings and that down-tuned guitar sound that almost sounds like a bass that I first heard on an early MESSUGGAH release. Good stuff if you want straightforward grindcore. (MH)
(Selfmadegod, www.selefmadegod.com)

TISCHLEREI LISCHITZKI – "Kommunikation Ist…" CD
Tremendous dark-punk from Germany. My German is a little rusty (or non-existent), so I'm a little short on info, but the native tongue brings to mind classics of old like SLIME or TOXOPLASMA, but with a more somber edge, maybe even heading into EA80 territory. The uniqueness of the language really puts the Deutsch-punk bands in a league of their own. Stirring stuff. (TB)
(self-released, www.tischlereilischitzki.de)

TOUGH LUCK – "Tough Times Don't Last, Tough People Do" CD
OK street punk by this trio out of Reading, PA. Most of the songs are decent but there are a few really awkward parts: the spelling out of the band's name in "Give 'Em Hell Kid" and the overly dramatic finish at the end of "Murder Me." Their sound has elements of ROGER MIRET AND THE DISASTERS, SOCIAL D, DARKBUSTER, and maybe BOUNCING SOULS. The vocals are nice and rough, kinda like a blending of the singers from REDUCERS SF, DROPKICK MURPHYS and





RADON. The highlight of this disc is "Faces Without Names"—a great minute-and-a-half blast which shows a lot of promise. It'll be cool to see how these guys develop down the road. (RK)
(Shrunken Head, www.myspace.com/toughluckglory)

THE TRASHIES – "Blue Tarp" EP
Seattle grim fucks, THE TRASHIES, make some decent racket with their latest release. What that racket is, is haunting shrill organized keyboards, rattling death, muffled vocals, and ghouled backup vocals. It's the sound of the next progression in goth-y '60s garage rock with a twist. This description, I realize, might make those with a low tolerance for tiki decorations or organs adorned with skulls and candles cringe; trust me here, it's not cringe-worthy and it doesn't seem to be bred from the same set as that tiki collecting set. It's dark din, catchy for ions, and it's totally fun. Add this to my goth prom dance party soundtrack. (AL)
(Rehab, www.rehab-records.com)

TRIAC – "Blue Room" EP
Yeah, I wouldn't call this straight-up cookie-cutter grind either, which is good. Throw PIG DESTROYER, IN/HUMANITY, and TODAY IS THE DAY in a blender, and the outcome might taste like what TRIAC is dishing out. Each of the seven tracks differs slightly from one to the next, keeping things from going down that well-tread bark-and-blast-beat trail. Hell, the last song reminds me of the MELVINS from the start. Limited to 500, and comes in a swanky package containing both a white colored vinyl record and a CD of the same tracks. I love this idea because CDs alone are not particularly interesting, but I'm not at the point where I cannot convert my vinyl to a digital format just yet. And I want to hear my tunes while I'm riding the bus. Here you get both. But checking the Forcefield records website they want $11.00 bucks for a seven-track EP that's under thirteen minutes?? Don't think so. The packaging isn't that over-the-top. Sorry. (JH)
(Forcefield, 107 West Broad St., Apt 301, Richmond, VA 23220)

URBAN UNREST – "No Relief" EP
Authentic '80s hardcore from Finland that's similar to UNIFORM CHOICE. The most noteworthy thing about this record is how great it sounds. I think it's hard for most bands to capture a sound that is both authentic and powerful. The only thing I have against this record is how the cover is a direct URBAN WASTE rip-off. Is it really that hard to come up with your own artwork? No more rip-offs. (PL)
(Evil Corporation, www.myspace.com/evilcorporationrecords)

VALOIDS – "Kick My Face" EP
A new band from SoCal, THE VALOIDS take their cue from QUEER PILLS-style punk. A few songs (like "Fuel My Power") are more straight-ahead punkers that would be perfect live; others, like the hilarious "Urine Trouble" capture the band's "fuck you" attitude. Mostly, however, it's smart-ass punk with an ironic sense of humor and fun, trashy energy. Very good. (SS)
(Stress Domain, www.stressdomainrecords.tk)

THEE VICARS – "…Let Us Play" EP
Extra "e" in "the," a song called "Budget Rock," I guess you know the sort of garage they're aiming for. But how well do they pull it off? Pretty damn well. The whole band plays well together (an A on their report cards), but their special strengths are the singer, who's got a distinctive voice that's snotty without sounding affected, and the lead guitarist, who pulls off the best Brian James-style lead since the DAMNED's first album. A keeper. (DD)
(Dire, www.myspace.com/diremusic)

VIVIAN GIRLS – "Wild Eyes" EP
Yes! Another mega-score! Like a month ago I was trying to figure out how to mail order this 7" and then figured I'd just merch it when they come through later this month. Foggy reverbed garage rock played and sung by three ladies. So good! "Wild eyes" moves at a constantly upward pace with skipping drums, rolling bass and a constant refrain of "wild, wild eye-eeeeeess" (it kind of goes up at the end). In the middle, there's a simple guitar solo buried deep in the fuzz. A shoe-gazey, less bad girl HEADCOATEES? I totally walk around the city mumbling this song to myself. Catchy in a non-irritating way. The second side, "My Baby Wants Me Dead," starts out with a riff full of danger and desperation and jams into silence, then builds up with a ghostly three-girl chant of the title, back into the jam and then ending in buzz. It's super dark and different enough from the B-side to keep everything exciting but similar enough to know it's the same band. This isn't going to leave my turntable anytime soon. (MM)
(Plays With Dolls, 226 Knickerbocker Ave. #38, Brooklyn, NY 11237)

WACO FUCK – "Paranoia Is Total Awareness" CD
This CD, which contains *Paranoia Is Total Awareness* (probably also available on vinyl) as well as the *Slow Decay* EP (from 2006) and the *No Child Left Behind* EP (from 2004), is my first exposure to WACO FUCK…gotta admit I'm impressed. Ripping fucking dark, negative hardcore that would not have been out of place on one of those *Reality* comps from the '90s alongside DESPISE YOU, DYSTOPIA, INFEST, LACK OF INTEREST, and other heavy-hitters. My only complaint is that the material starts to blend together and lose impact over the course of 23 tracks—I'd much rather listen to the three records separately—but that's the case with most HC "collection" CDs, anyway. Bet these dudes kill it live. (CS)
(Life's a Rape, PO Box 278, Carlsbad, CA 92018)

WANTMONSTER – "Lazer Eye Death Squad" EP
Yo! BC, Canada's WANTMONSTER kicks out some pretty righteous jams on this 7", which was originally released as a demo in 2006. It's like they've taken a batch of '90s East Coast hardcore tunes, extracted only the sick mosh parts (bro), and reassembled them into the five tracks on this here EP. Only for "Count Dankula" (yep, that's what the song's called) do they speed up the pace past mid-tempo. I'm kinda diggin' it, though it's sort of like eating a heaping spoonful of pure mayo—delicious, but *almost* too much of a good thing all at once. Nice every once and a while, but you don't want to make a habit of it or you'll risk getting sick of the stuff (I'm speaking from experience here, ladies and gentlemen). Anyway, don't let the occasional open-E chug and double-bass pedal fool ya—judging by the lyrics, the men of WANTMONSTER appear to be a peaceful folk. I get the impression they'd rather mellow out and have a good time than pick a fight in the pit and bash someone's face in. The track "Eating Poison" even ruminates on society's dependence on pharmaceutical corporations and their drugs. There's room for improvement in the production (too metal) and art (too basic) departments, but when these dudes get around to recording and releasing a proper record, I'll be sure to check it out. (CS)
($5 [Canadian] ppd: Black Banana, 521 Carbonate Street, Nelson, BC V1L 4P4 www.myspace.com/blackbananarecords)

WELT – "Ashes To Ashes" CD
I was wondering if this was the old band WELT, and it is. From the era of FACE TO FACE and GAMEFACE, this band is still good—well played emo-core punk with lots of melody. Featuring a production team including BILL STEVENSON, this four-song EP is a good comeback start. (RL)
(Cider City, www.weltarmy.com)

XYX – "Sistema de Terminacion Sexual" EP
This is what I wish the no-wave/GANG OF FOUR revival of 2000 had sounded like. It cancels out all the shitty moody eyeliner and pouty vacant mouths with one bass line. XYX hail from the same town in Mexico as LOS LLAMARADA. For some reason the sound reminds me of the song "Dark Entries" by BAUHAUS if played by AS MERCENARIAS. Driving doom mixed with some straight up disruption.

It's just a bass and drums and some delay but you don't notice anything missing. The singer's voice is so tough and cool sounding—AS MERCENARIAS mixed with, like, ULTIMO RESORTE maybe? Just the ultimate destructive art-girl vocals and the music is like an updated SUICIDE reclamation thru destruction, rock 'n' roll, noise pollution, sex doom, the primal sound of seeing things go wrong and making a song out of it. Essential. (LG)
(S-S, 1114 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95811)

YDINASEETON POHJOLA – "Euro-Ohjukeet" EP
This Finnish hardcore recalls RIISTETYT with its relentless, incisive sound; it's solidly anchored in the bass guitar, but the shouted (almost incanted) vocals are the band's most distinctive feature. This is mostly mid- to faster-tempo tunes, with a uniquely Finnish feel for discordant riffs. On the other hand, the tunes at times might profit from a more distinctive treatment of the style, though "Talousjtiset" captures the band's style quite well. The cover design recalls the first IMPACT EP, but it's appropriate. (SS)
(Nightstick Justice, www.nightstickjustice.com)

ZHENIA GOLOV – "PC Fascist" EP
ZHENIA GOLOV takes a deadly serious approach to sexism, racism, and homophobia and the music is hard-wrought punk and thrash. In their zeal to adhere to all their youthful optimism these men may have missed observing the forest for the trees. The metal guitar parts are exhilarating and the condescending lyrics represent a naïve, uninformed approach to real world problems—get back to us when you are 35, and we can see if life has taught you any lessons. (BR)
(Railroaded, 85 Delafield Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, writteningasoline@yahoo.com)

V/A – "Amargado de la Vida" EP
Lolo from KOTRAATTTAQUE has finally gotten this record out. It has been years in the making and is cool to finally blast this on my turntable. Multiple songs here from various bands including my favorite era of SIN ORDEN (Chicago), SIN DIOS (Spain), the amazing and under the radar band FRONTERORIZMO from Los Angeles, and lastly SERES HUMANOS from Mexico. Overall, this is fast and raw hardcore damage sung in Spanish. A very cool release. (MS)
(Amargado de la Vida, xo737x@sbcglobal.net)

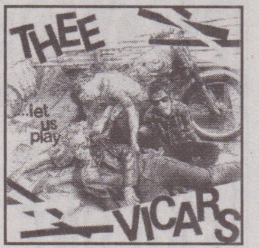
V/A – "Dancehall Troops Volume 3" CD
Great comp CD boasting 33 bands of various power-pop, garage, new wave, and '77-inspired punk rock. Not many throwaways on this keeper of a comp, which is a rarity, including great stand-outs such as STEVE E NIX AND THE CUTE LEPERS, SODA POP KIDS, SICK FITS, THE TRANZMITORS, THE POWERCHORDS, FINAL SOLUTION, and my new favs, SOMETHING FIERCE, as well as a slew of others. As the song goes, "a good comp is hard to find." Luckily, I found a rare one. Go get this. (SD)
(No Front Teeth, www.nofrontteeth.net)

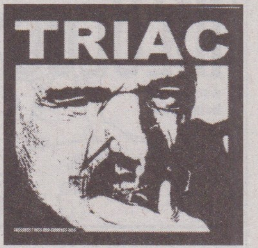
V/A – "Des Jeunes Gens Mödernes 1978-1983" LP
This compilation appears to have been released in concert with a retrospective art show of the same name at a gallery in Paris. The music runs the post-punk, "cold wave" gamut suggested by the timeframe given in the title, but leans heavily on the experimental, electronic, death-disco side of things. Most readers might already be familiar with names like METAL BOYS (e.g. METAL URBAIN) or LIZZIE MERCIER DESCLOUX, but most of the stuff on this record was new to me. If you're into hearing France's versions of SOFT CELL, TUBEWAY ARMY, or THE HUMAN LEAGUE, then seek out this comp immediately. I have to say I thoroughly enjoyed it. The French have a knack for this sort of thing. Naturally, the art is very nice as well, and the poster insert comes with a potted history (en Francais) on the back. *C'est formidable!* (AM)
(Born Bad, 38 Ave de Stalingrad, 93 170 Bagnolet, FRANCE, www.myspace.com/bornbadrecords)

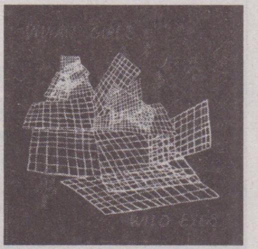
V/A – "IVG Vol. 1: Futur Anterieur, France '75/'85" CD
It's a shame that some of these French compilations documenting an amazing era of experimentalism, forward thinking, and enviable taste weren't around when I was going through my early/pre-HUMAN LEAGUE phase. These recent dark time capsules are the perfect addendum to the off-kilter synth, noise, pre-industrial sound that my friends and I were eagerly searching out at the time. The French synth-punk stuff documented on them is heavier, stronger, more weird than anything we found then. *IVG Vol.1* is easily lumped in with these handful of comps, *BIPPP*, *Des Jeunes…*, etc., but what sets it apart is the dripping, dark, moody minimalism of it—yes, moody, like we expect French artifacts to be. Standouts here are obviously the RUTH track, as well as NINI RAVIOLETTE, ATOM CRISTAL, and the short and strange THEATRE COMMERCIAL bits, but there are no clunkers here. All of it flows together as a reminder of what's really cool. (AL)
(Born Bad, 38 Ave de Stalingrad, 93 170 Bagnolet, FRANCE, www.myspace.com/bornbadrecords)

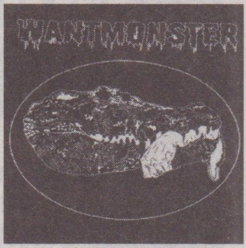
V/A – "Music by People Who Drink Cider in the Gutter" CD
This 20-track compilation of punk and ska bands is actually quite good. Despite the fact that while I used to drink cider 27 years or so ago now, I never did it in the gutter! From the ENABLERS/DRAGONS rockin' sound of THE GREAT ST. LOUIS, to the ska-punk stylings of HARIJAN, to the anthemic street punk of DEATH BY DECIBELS, this disc is well-rounded. Thematically, there are a bunch of songs about booze/drinking, plus others on, well, a bunch of different stuff. Compilations are really hit-and-miss with me, but this one definitely hits more than it misses. Worth your investigation. (RK)
(TNS, www.myspace.com/thatsnotskankingrecords)

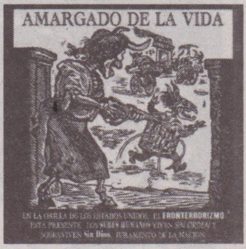
V/A – "Sick of Fun" EP
This is great! Eleven bands on one EP, including BROKEN NEEDLE, ECOLI, BORN BAD, COKE BUST, and lots of other great up-and-coming fast hardcore bands. If you know about any of these bands, I won't need to tell you to pick this up as soon as you can. For those that haven't though, buy this! (PL)
(Stress Domain, www.stressdomainrecords.tk)











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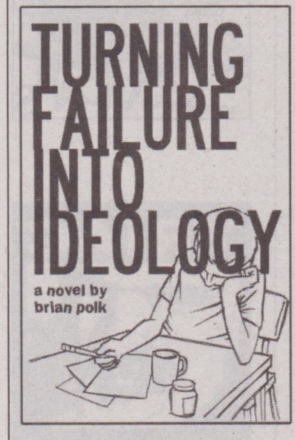

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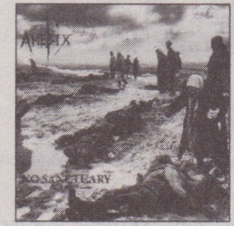

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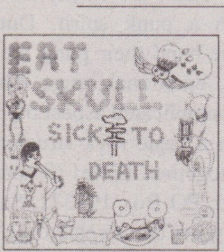

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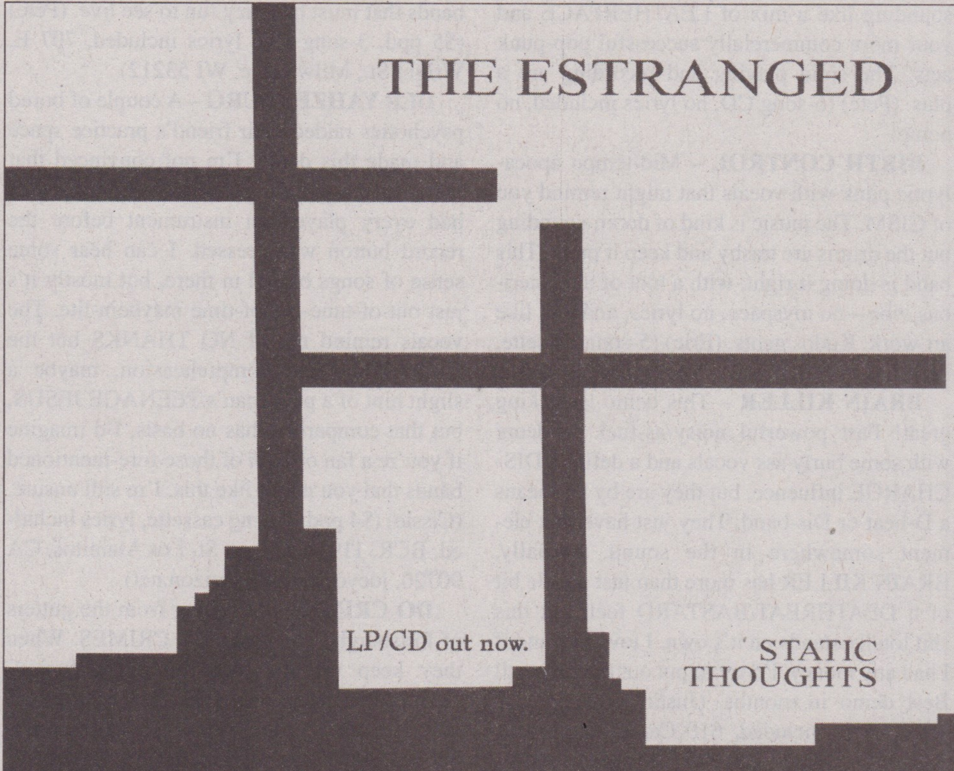

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Justin Briggs, Cissie Scurlock, and Eric Butterworth.

ABRUPT – Are a new Bay Area band with folks from SCURVY DOGS and BORN/DEAD. Much like the 'DOGS, ABRUPT plays speedy hardcore with riffs composed of more than just three chords. These songs just rip along. Heather's vocals, at times, actually remind me of THIS IS MY FIST in the way that they are angry and fairly gruff but retain a real sense of melody. This really works with the fast hardcore tunes. I'm diggin it. (JU) (4-song CD, no lyrics included, inspiredbyangst@hotmail.com)

ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES – This one starts off with a rock 'n' roll style hardcore tune with a rock riff and lots of guitar soloing played in a hardcore way and fronted by screaming/singing vocals. The following five songs fall more into the pop-punk category, sounding like a mix of LEATHERFACE and your more commercially successful pop-punk acts. The solid playing and recording are a plus. (Pete) (6-song CD, no lyrics included, no home)

BIRTH CONTROL – Mid-tempo apocalyptic punk with vocals that might remind you of GISM. The music is kind of doom-sounding but the drums are trashy and keep it punk. This band is doing it right, with a hint of a mysterious vibe—no myspace, no lyrics, and cult like art work. Kudos gents. (Eric) (5-song cassette, no lyrics included, www.freelegalhighs.org)

BRAIN KILLER – This demo is fucking great! Fast powerful noisy-as-fuck hardcore with some burly ass vocals and a definite DISCHARGE influence, but they are by no means a D-beat or Dis-band. They just have that element somewhere in the sound. Actually, BRAIN KILLER has more than just a little bit of a DEATHREAT/BASTARD feel, but this shit totally stands on it's own. I love this and if I had any money, I'd try to put out their record! Best demo in months. (Justin) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, 610 Cambridge Street, Allston, MA 02134, terminalryan@-gmail.com)

CHAINSAW SEX VIKINGS / DEMONFILTH – CSV actually blaze some serious ass here. Recorded in 2004, their half of this split is filled with 13 tracks of charging, triumphant-sounding, melodic crust-y hardcore with three punkers—two male and one female—trading off on the vocal duties, usually in unison. Pretty fucking cool. DEMONFILTH rock in a similar style but add a shit-ton of fuzz and aren't quite as melodic. The DEMONFILTH tracks here were recorded in 2001. Damn. I honestly didn't expect much from this but if melodic crust-y hardcore is your thing I urge you to send off for this from… (Justin) ($4 ppd, 24-song CD, no lyrics included, John Barber, 33 8th Street, Greenville, SC 29611)

CRAPPY DRACULA – The band plays sort of goofy but heavy, nautical themed punk songs. The sound is similar to a heavier version of the DEAD MILKMEN with an extra dose of Sacramento style silliness (like the LIZARDS, etc.). This is definitely one of those bands that must be crazy fun to see live. (Pete) ($5 ppd, 3-song CD, lyrics included, 707 E. Wright St., Milwaukee, WI 53212)

DER YAHZENBURG – A couple of bored psychotics raided their friend's practice space and made this demo. I'm not convinced that either of the people in DER YAHZENBURG had every played an instrument before the record button was pressed. I can hear some sense of songs buried in there, but mostly it's just out-of-tune-out-of-time mayhem-lite. The vocals remind me of NO THANKS but the music is beyond comprehension, maybe a slight hint of a poor man's TEENAGE JESUS, but that comparison has no basis, I'd imagine if you're a fan of *both* of those fore-mentioned bands that you might like this. I'm still unsure. (Cissie) ($4 ppd, 4-song cassette, lyrics included, BCR, 11951 Reagan St, Los Alamitos, CA 90720, joeycallanan@verizon.net)

DO CRIMES – Crawling from the gutters of Pittsburgh, PA comes DO CRIMES. When they keep up the pace this thing fuckin' smokes, but when they slow down things get lost. I'm all for some metal-y mosh business but here it just doesn't do it for me. The vocals and recording could place this band in Albany, NY in the late '80s; the vocals especially have a serious LIFE'S BLOOD quality to them. Like I said, when DO CRIMES play in high-gear, I'm lovin' this, and the production is great for the style, but I could really do without the china cymbal and "skilled" guitar solos. Overall, this is really cool. (Justin) ($3 ppd, 6-song CD or cassette, lyrics included, Jim Sullivan, 4571 Carroll Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15224, myspace.com/docrimespgh)

THE DOGSHIT BOYS – This is basic mid-tempo punk with straightforward drumming and power chords. It's sort of in the vein of street punk but with a SABBATH influence. What makes the whole thing strange is the oddball, high-pitched, nasal vocals. (Pete) (6-song CD, lyrics included, dogshitboys.com)

DONNER PASS – These are catchy indie rock-style songs with a punk spirit. Dual vocalists, who give the band their punk feel, dominate the melodic, emotional songs. The instrumentation has a complicated aspect but it always comes back to a basic rock structure that keeps the songs together. (Pete) (5 song CD, no lyrics included, PO Box 193372, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.donnerpass.org)

DOPECHARGE – This SF band plays UK82-styled hardcore, slightly reverbed vocals and all. At first this didn't really grab me but as I listened on I really started to like it quite a bit. They don't deviate much from the style but I don't think they mean to either. The recording gives a much darker feeling than these songs would probably have otherwise and I think it benefits from it. Cool. (JU) (5-song cassette, no lyrics included, no address)

THE EGGS – This band plays sloppy punk rock with a garage rock feel that comes largely from the twang on the guitar. Their better songs are the ones that sound like early MINUTEMEN tracks with lots of starts and stops and a sort of funky guitar sound. Unfortunately, the off key singing/screaming female vocals grate on the ears but the energy of the songs as a whole will keep you listening. (Pete) ($3 ppd, 10-song CD, no lyrics included, 5310 Broadmoor St., Greensboro, NC 27410, theeggsnc@gmail.com)

GET BENT – It's pop-punk for fans of stuff like OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, The ERGS and so on. The catchy songs are aggressive in a sing-along style, giving nods to the likes of CRIMPSHRINE and JAWBREAKER, in a second-generation sort of way. It's by no means new or clever but the songs are well

written and well played. I can only imagine that some records are coming soon. (Pete) ($2 ppd, 5-song CD, lyrics included, 60-59 Myrtle Ave., Ridgewood, NY 11385)

GHUNDI – Blast-beat hardcore mixes with NEGATIVE APPROACH-style punk, metal influenced breakdowns, and gang backing vocals on this scorcher. This is hardcore punk that has enough time changes and catchy guitar parts to make it a bit more interesting than most of the stuff out there. (Pete) ($4 or ?4 ppd, 8-song CD, lyrics included, Kollin Finnerty, Liam Mellows Rd., Loughrea, Co. Galway, Ireland, neverinamillion@gmail .com)

THE HEADIES – These ridiculously cheesy pop-punk songs about girls are hard to take seriously. The songs are up-tempo with poppy rock 'n' roll guitar riffs and all three band members contributing on vocals. Think a not-so-clever MR T EXPERIENCE mixed with a not so good ADOLESCENTS. (Pete) (8-song CD, no lyrics included, no info)

GLUE – This Massachusetts band has folks from R 'N' R in it and you can totally tell. Mid-paced hardcore that isn't afraid of some rock 'n' roll flourishes in the mix, with plenty of mosh breakdowns (not the Victory records kind of mosh) and a vocalist that lands somewhere around Curtis from CHAIN OF STRENGTH. (JU) (5-song CD, lyrics included, myspace .com/gluedtotheedge)

GRASS WIDOW – For lack of a better reference, I would say this reminds me of the second RAINCOATS album. This all-girl trio plays original interesting music with catchy vocal melodies. They are on tour right this second as you are sitting there reading this. Get up and go see them live, you will like it. If you don't, you can send me hate mail. Either way it's going to be satisfying. (Eric) (7-song CD, no lyrics included, myspace.com/grasswidow-music)

LAS CONTRAS / METH MOUTH – This tape features live sets from two Belleville, Illinois hardcore bands. It proves that punk bands waste far too much time while on stage. There is so much fooling around during these sets that it made me anxious. LAS CONTRAS does the blasted-out, violent nonsense style in a sufficiently foreboding manner. The live recording gives it an extra fucked-up and mean element. METH MOUTH varies from blind thrashing-to-mosh-to-ANNIHILATION TIME-style rock operas. They spend way too much time fixing their hair, or something equally banal in between songs but other than that they sound all right. Their actual demo, which I reviewed below, is way better than this live set. (Cissie) (?-song cassette, no lyrics included, myspace.com/dinglerecords)

METH MOUTH – Another band mining the sound of early-'80s hardcore. If this were 1982 they'd have a hit on some tape comp that a kid from a Minneapolis suburb put out. METH TEETH has locked onto the key elements that make this genre timeless. They have a great sounding frontman, a capable and interesting drummer, a full and powerful guitar sound, and their songs vary in tempo and dynamics. They've thought to include a backwards masked version of the songs too. Clever. I'd buy a 7". (Cissie) (13-song cassette, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/dinglrecords)

THE MICE – I really wanted this to be a secret copy of the final and unreleased record by the amazing Cleveland band from the 1980s, instead I get melodic pop-punk from Southern California. It sounds like a mix of early SCREECHING WEASEL and THE MISFITS. The best part of the whole thing is the GO-GO'S-style riff on the first song, the rest of it is rather uninspiring. (Pete) (9-song CD, no lyrics included, PO Box 21254, El Cajon, CA 92021, www.micemusic.com)

PIZZA OD – Oh that name is rich! Okay, enough o' that... Lyon, France's PIZZA OD play really stripped down and straightforward punk with clean-sounding guitars, scratchy female vocals. Not really much else to say... Good. Hi Vinnie! (JU) (8-song cassette, lyrics in French included, c/o Marie Degrange, 9 Rue des 3 Rois, 69007 Lyon, FRANCE)

SHRED SAVAGE – Skating a pool in SoCal with your buddies, grilling up burgers. The production values on this are high, but other than that, it is a solid demo that sounds like IRON MAIDEN-meets-SCREECHING WEASEL-meets-skate rock. (Eric) (4-song CD, no lyrics included, myspace.com/shred-savvage)

SOCIAL CIRCKLE – This tape has been deemed the *March Session* and I imagine that these songs will eventually see light elsewhere. For those that haven't heard SOCIAL CIRCKLE's previous EPs, they play hardcore punk influenced by various '70s and '80s bands. Their guitar sound cannot be reckoned with—Matt has the perfect amount of distortion and flourishes for what they're trying to accomplish. In fact, the solid, punchy drumming and thoughtful guitar playing are what sets them apart from all the other bands playing this style. Anyone can start a CIRCLE JERKS tribute band, but few folks can write songs that remain memorable. SOCIAL CIRCKLE's songs stick in my head. (Cissie) (10-song cassette, no lyrics included, socialcirckle@gmail.com)

STAAGS – These eight punk rock 'n' roll songs sound like a more hardcore version of the early LA punk bands such as the ANGERY SAMOANS and so on. The songs are basic punk tunes with three-chord guitar parts and snotty, screaming vocals. It's short, it's solid and it sounds pretty good. (Pete) (8-song CD, no lyrics included, no info)

STEADY DECLINE – "Violence Breeds Power Violence" has to be added to the greatest song titles of all time list. As for the music, the band plays basic hardcore punk rock. The songs are generally mid to up-tempo with straightforward drumming backing up power chords and dual screaming vocals (you know, the growling male vs. the high pitched screaming female). Unfortunately, the poor recording leads to the whole thing sounding very muddy. (Pete) ($2 ppd, 8-song CD, lyrics included, 216 Hewitt Ave. #3, Marquette, MI 49855)

STRANGER KIDS – This band makes me want to live in Southern California again. This sounds like what's been going on with newer bands like TRANZMITORS and STATUES, but obviously way less produced, but in a good way. Don't be lazy, go to your computer and check out their Myspace and then send two bucks to these power pop-ish folks. (Eric) ($2 ppd, 3-song CD, no lyrics included, F. Espinosa, 590 E. 67th Street, Inglewood, CA 90302, myspace.com/strangerbsg)

SYSTEMPHOBIA – The majority of the songs on this CD are up-tempo, hardcore punk rock songs with deep screaming vocals that come in short bursts. It's good but fairly basic stuff that's akin to the likes of THE PIST or SUBMACHINE. The better songs are the not-so-typical hardcore songs including a slower (but not really slow) dark but catchy, semi-instrumental tune and a lo-fi, mid-tempo punk number, both of which are really driven by the bass guitar. (Pete) (9-song CD, lyrics included, systemphobia@telenet.be)

VIDEO DISEASE – Whoa. All I can think about is tie-dyed t-shirts, Internet hype, and another band with the letters V-I-D in their name, that I always hear Layla talking about. VIDEO DISEASE plays noisy, abrasive hardcore punk that some might call slop but others would call demented bliss. It sounds like Nick Blinko drawings on your genitals. Decent. (Cissie) (4-song cassette, no lyrics included, videodisease77@gmail.com)

WHALELIMB – These nine songs come in at just under four minutes in total. They mix up fast, spastic hardcore that is heavy on the low end with slower, metal influenced parts. A number of vocalists get in on the act, mostly on the growling side of things but there is one more high-pitched nasal screamer. The best song on here is "Innocence," which sounds like an eleven-second clip of a BORN AGAINST song. (Pete) (9-song CD, lyrics included, 2119 Holly Ave., Clarkston, WA 99403, whalelimb@gmail.com)

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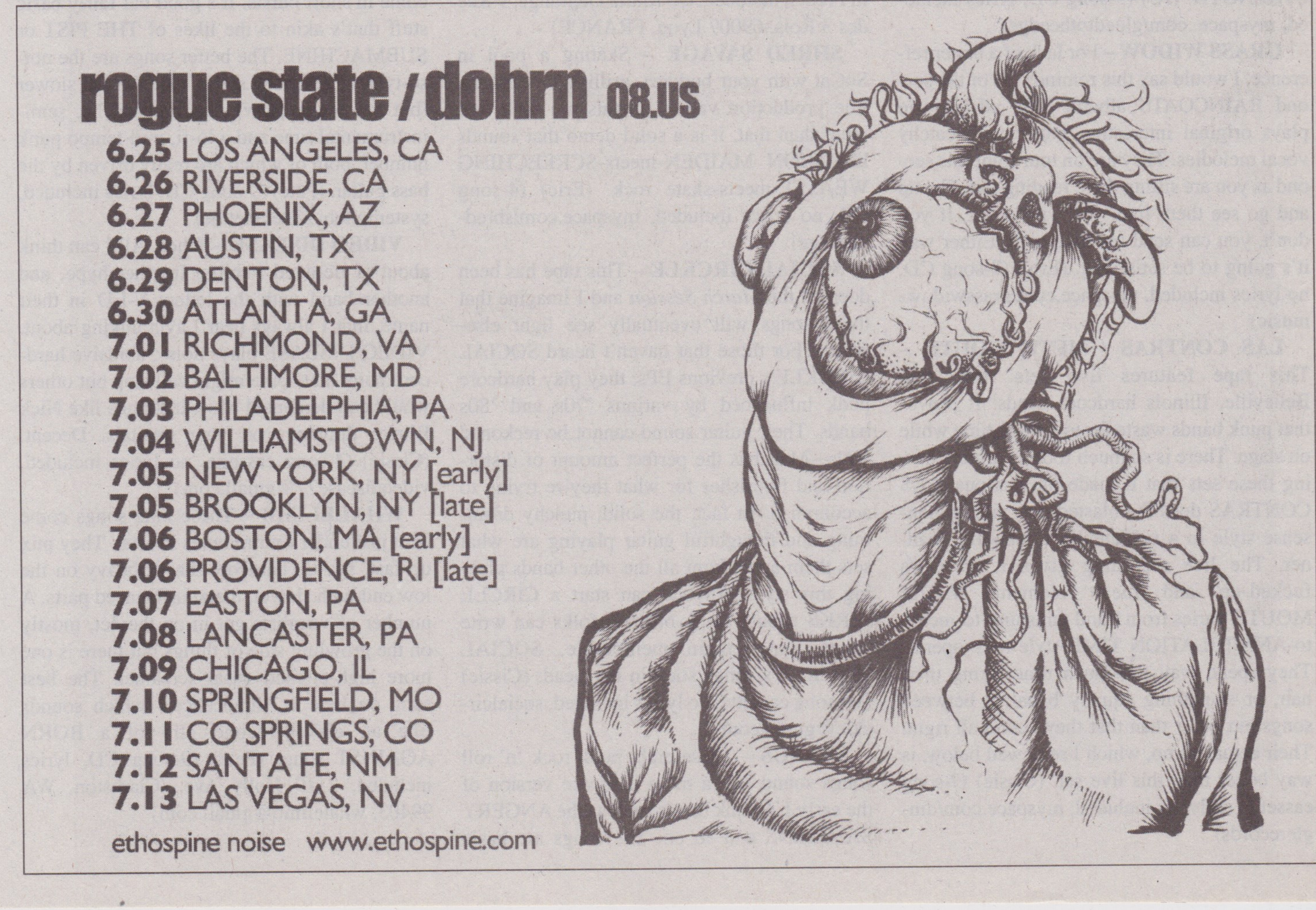

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7.07 EASTON, PA
7.08 LANCASTER, PA
7.09 CHICAGO, IL
7.10 SPRINGFIELD, MO
7.11 CO SPRINGS, CO
7.12 SANTA FE, NM
7.13 LAS VEGAS, NV
ethospine noise www.ethospine.com

ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(JD) Judy Balmin
(JB) Julia Booze
(JU) Justin Briggs
(BG) Bob Goldie
(CH) Cassie Harwood
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(NM) Nick Mangel
(JM) Jeff Mason
(SM) Scott Miller
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens

85PUNKROCK #1 / $2 world or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 28 pgs
The author of this quickly-read zine—Andy Grotesque—has been putting together zines for nearly 20 years now, starting in 1987 with *Urinal Slime* and, later, *Xyster*. I can't say I'm familiar with either. Featured in this inaugural issue of his new outlet are interviews with Jukka of Finnish hardcore band Sotatila and the Kämäset Levyt record label, and Boot Party: a punk rock radio show out of Springfield, Illinois hosted by a couple young 'uns. Also included are a couple pages of record and CD reviews and a story of Andy's intro to punk rock. A good read. (JU)
PO Box 6 / Abbotsford, BC / Canada V2T 6Z4

CONSCIOUS DEFECT #1 / $0.63
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 8 pgs
I think it's entirely possible that *Conscious Defect* was made on the way to the post office. The eight pages of content include various suggestions for being punk, including stapling shit to clothing, stealing wrenched, and wearing black at protests. Somewhere this crossed the line between satire and stupidity and never got back. I think this review might have taken longer than the zone took to read or write. That's either sublime or idiotic. (CR)
consciousdefect@inbox.com

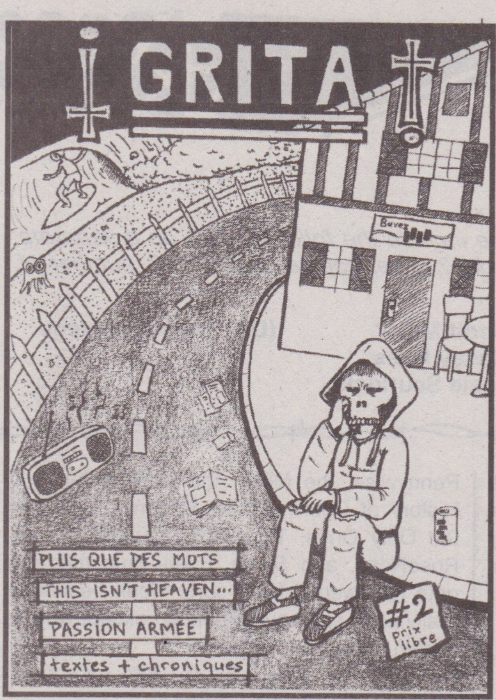
CONSTANT STRUGGLE #2 / $3.50, trades accepted
8.5 x 11 – copies – 18 pgs
Constant Struggle is a standard cut and paste style punk fanzine. It's got record reviews of Nightstick Justice, Social Circkle, Acid Reflux, Civic Progress. There are interviews with The Gnostics, Lost Boys, and Pandamonium. There's also a bunch of ads and just plain band write-ups. The whole thing seems to be pretty Orange County centered. My favorite part is the man-on-the-street type section about the sadly defunct venue—Mike's House. Alicia said, "It was like a place for friends to get together and have a giant, barbeque sauce filled pillow fight. The floor got slippery and people fell, there were fights, there were drunk guys who passed out and got fucked with, there were giant piss-filled teddy bears, but there were also some amazing shows put on." Ah, grandma's house in the 'burbs. Awesome. Keep doing your thing, Mike. (JD)
Mike Roberts, P.O. Box 1690, San Capistrano, CA 92673
www.myspace.com/constantstrugglezine
constantstruggle88@yahoo.com

DOLL #5 & #6 / price on request
8.5 x 11 – printed – 130 pgs
Well, one thing I can always say about this Japanese magazine is that it is really pretty, with a lot of glossy photographs and a very wide gamut of music coverage. If I only had a button maker, I could make a festive array of fashion-y punk faces and outfits. In #5 and #6, respectively, there are interviews or possibly biographies or retrospectives on Bauhaus, Pennywise, the Mods, the Continental Kids, History of Cobra, KOGA Records, UG Man, the Only Ones, Tiger Army Cursed, Rapes, RoseRose, and Slang. Every time this zine gets reviewed it feels sorta weak because I really can't say anything much except what is written in English! (JB)
No. 303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9 / Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-Ku / Tokyo / Japan
hensyu@doll-mag.co.jp
www.doll-mag.co.jp

DOMD #4 / ?2.5 plus postage
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 44pgs
DOMD is one of my favorite classic crust punk zines going right now. Krogh is a hard worker and handles the zine as well as a record label. The artwork is killer, and they layout pure early-'90s. This issue has interviews with *Profane Existence*, Selfish, Kieltolaki, Tolshock, Misanthropic, and there are tons of excellent quality photos. Comes with CD-R! (NM)
www.domdfanzine.net

DWELLING PORTABLY May 2008 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 22 pgs
Bert and Holly are real consistent with the zines they put out—plain looking, typewritten, and packed with information. This one might not be advisable for hypochondriacs, as a lot of it relates to how you can get microbes on or in you. Also some sympathetic zines are listed. The rest of it is anecdotes and suggestions from the world of really cheap living. Check it out if you're sick of payin' rent. (JM)
PO box 190-nxr / Philomath, OR 97370

EAR DAMAGE #20 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 56 pgs
Dude, Mr. Editor, what's yr damage anyway? You bash *MRR* so much in your magazine and are *soooo* bummed that one reviewer didn't like it. Make a better zine then! Sheesh! I found like fifty typos but who cares, right? I like, totally dig the Mr. T history lesson and the busted interview with Slim Wilson, the dipshit, spotlighting his hella bogus ideas about anarchists. What I liked best though was the TKO records



interview because it shed so much light on the goings on behind the label and proved to the world that bygones *are* bygones! Who would have thought!? Congratulations on issue. twomp! But where's all the porn? (JB)
Ear Damage / PO Box 582 / Eight Mile, AL 36663

EQUALIZING DISTORT Vol. 8, #2 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
This zine is a cool concept that I wish I had thought of back when I had a radio show. *Equalizing Distort* is a weekly radio show in Toronto that's dedicated to playing all sorts of punk and hardcore, new and old, and supporting the local scene. The zine serves as an extension of the show and comes out monthly to members who support the station. This thing might only be 16 pages, but it's packed full of reviews and decent interviews of bands that play live in the studio. This month's interviews are with Hard Charger and Boulevard Trash (a band I'm interested in hearing after reading this). This issue also features a "best of" for the year 2007 and from all the bands featured I would say this must be a damn good two hours of radio! There's also a fun tour diary from two punks who went to Japan and saw a bunch of good shows. Rounding off the issue are listings for upcoming hardcore shows and a couple of punk-related book reviews. This zine/show—hell, the station itself—is a rare gem that I hope people in the area are supporting. (BG)
c/o CIUT 89.5 FM, 21 Foundry Ave. #5, Toronto, Ontario, M6H 4K7, Canada

FREE RANGE: A GIRLS LIFE ON TWO WHEELS #1
8 x 5.5 – copied – 37 pgs
Free Range is the diary of a young girl as she travels on her motorcycle around the East Coast and Midwest for a time. She decided to take the trip because she had no idea what she wanted to do with her life or where she wanted to be, so dropped everything and traveled for a while. While the zine is based on her diary, the passages were written after her trip was over so the details of her journey don't seem like they are as vivid as they would have been if the writing had been in the moment. What hurt the content of this zine is that she said she was feeling lost and that's why she went on this trip, but whether or not this was ever resolved for her wasn't addressed. I would like to know—I spent an entire Bart ride home thinking I was going to find out! (MJ)
freerangeyt@gmail.com

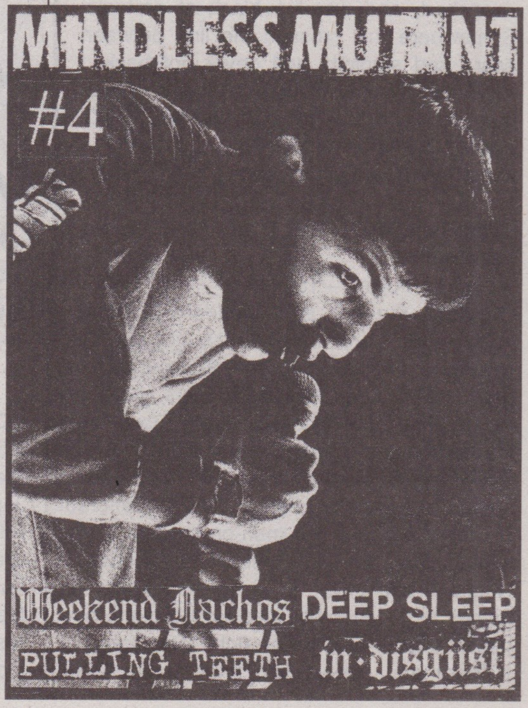
¡GRITA O MUERE! #2 / $4
8.5 x 5.5 – copied– 72 pgs
Grita O Muere is a cut and paste style French language punk fanzine. It's text dense with band and zine reviews and columns. The columns cover topics like "norms in porn movies," eBay, political stuff, and music. Bands written up include Passion Armée, Strong As Ten, Totalitär, Knife Fight, and many more. Overall, it's an attractive layout, seems very thorough, and I wish I could read it. Translation please! (JD)
IBARRART Bruno, Les Hauts de Kalitxo Log B10, 15 Rue Itsas Ondo, 64122 Urrugne, France
Ibarrart.bruno@orange.fr

INNER SWINE Vol. 14, #1 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 60 pgs
Inner Swine is a long running effort that's full of humorous rants and is very well written. I seriously enjoyed reading this and I ended up carrying it around for a couple of days to entertain myself during my dreaded bus commute to work. There's really nothing *punk rock* about this per se, as it contains no music reviews, interviews, or any sort of political ramblings, but there's a total underlying sarcastic view of society that reveals a punk attitude within. There's a funny article in here about trying to learn how to play the guitar that I can totally relate to, and I also dig the anecdotes about cats since I'm a cat lover myself. I also loved the funny defense of cynicism piece. The last third of the issue contains a fictional short story that I haven't got to yet before typing up this review (deadlines man, deadlines!), but I am looking forward to it since I dig this writer's style. Definitely worth checking out. (BG)
PO Box 3024, Hoboken, NJ 07030, www.innerswine.com

INSIPIDLY IDAHO #1 / $2ppd or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – 60pgs – copied
At 60 pages *Insipidly Idaho* is pretty thick, but it reads fairly quick. This issue is dedicated to stories about the author Ryan's friends, Carli and Mykel. Apparently Carli and Mykel were two women involved in the Portland pop punk scene that died in a car crash nearly ten years ago. Carli and Mykel made Ryan mix tapes and encouraged him to go to shows in Portland. I enjoyed reading about Ryan's adventures with these two women. Ryan has a laid back, cynical style of writing that is engaging and fun to read. Even though his story is inspired by the death of friends he keeps it light by consistently referring to them as "fat and dead." Some might think this is offensive but it is stated with empathy and works to ease the mood. Definitely refreshing to read a well-written personal zine. (CI)
EUTS 05 / 616 SE Harrison St / Portland, OR 97214

KILL OR MAIM #2
8 x 11 – copied – 8pgs
This is a short and sweet collection of one-page hardcore zines from Australia. Contained within are single-pagers from *Distort, Dehumanized, Tear Me Down, Deny Everything, Ratcharge, Touch Me I'm Mick, Sick Of Goodbyes*, and *Dumb Hardcore*. The collection is mostly reviews and interviews with hardcore bands, although there are some zine reviews too, and a couple personal rants. The look of Kill or Maim is a typical hardcore layout, and is easy to read.
DX / PO Box 239 / North Carlton / Vic 3054 / Australia
culthardcore.org / distorttheworld@gmail.com

LOCK OUT THE LANDLORDS! ANTI-EVICTION RESISTANCE 1929-36 / $3
4.5 x 11.5 – printed – 38 pgs
Lock Out the Landlords! is the latest pamphlet



put out by Homebrew Books and written by Iain McIntyre. Barricade Publishing originally published it in 1998. It's a history of the anti-eviction resistance movement in Australia during the Depression when huge numbers of people were out of work and wanting. Most of the content is presented in a timeline of the events that transpired during that particularly challenging and inspiring period of time. It's full of old-timey, historical photographs, newspapers clippings, and a fine woodblock printed image that I enjoy very much on the title page. This history is all about the working class getting organized, taking a stand to keep their homes, fighting with cops, writing songs about fighting with cops, and tearing the properties apart when they couldn't keep their homes. Pretty cool. Get yerselves educated and read this thing. (JD)
PO Box 4434, Melbourne Uni, Parkville, 3052, Australia
questionmarks01@yahoo.co.uk

MANAGER #5 / free or trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 80 pgs
Kinda sad, kinda heartwarming, kinda like, dang, you went there. This zine really is about being a manager. I guess there are definitely sentiments herein that any hard-working punk could relate to, even if it feels sort of like a bummer to admit that you really like it when people do their job. I too, have a quasi-management position at the store I've also worked at forever. I get it. But do I turn to zines to commiserate? Does one need that kind of validation in this sick, sick world? Hey, if you are lucky enough to still be writhing from shit job to shit job, there is a section that tells you how to ace a job interview from the perspective of the employer. (JB)
1409 Longfellow St. / NW Washington, DC 20011 / Jack45rpm@gmail.com

MINDLESS MUTANT #4 / $3 or trade, world: contact first
8.5 x 11 – copied – 48 pgs
If you've been keeping up with the current crop of hardcore zines you are most likely familiar with this one by now. This particular ish is (almost entirely) dedicated to Matt's tales of five weeks on the road with his friends Weekend Nachos. He's included journal type entries of everyday of the tour, along with interviews with Deep Sleep, Pulling Teeth, In-Disgust (all bands that they met up with on this trip), as well as lots of photos of the Nachos and many other bands. I think *Mindless Mutant* is one of the better zines going and with this new issue I will maintain that perception. I think what really seals the deal here is the way Matt's enthusiasm for what he's writing about really shines through. This one's a keeper. (JU)
Mindless Mutant c/o Matt Rolland / 3108 98th Street East / Highland, IN 46322
mindlessmutantfanzine@gmail.com

MY FAVORITE BAND IS LAMB OF GOD #1 / $2ppd or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – 12pgs – copied
I plowed through *My Favorite Band Is Lamb of God* in five painfully banal minutes. It's the perfect length for one trip to the bathroom and it's appropriately filled with toilet humor. The first two pages of the zine are centered around the author, Martin, asking his friends, "When was the last time you bled"? Many of the people stated that it was during sex, but their sarcasm did not come across very well in print, gross. Martin's stories about his bong collection were a little more endearing but still kinda, eh. I guess the five minutes I spent reading this

wasn't a total waste, but I can't think of any reason why someone would want to spend the time/money to order this through the mail. It's filled with silly teen pothead humor and I found it boring. Martin does another zine called *Hey Ronnie* and from what I've read it contains more substance than this. Whatever though, it's all in done in harmless fun—I've certainly read worse... (CI)
Martin Meyer / 1142 Illini Dr / O Fallon, IL 62669

PIPE BOMB #39 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
Pipe Bomb has devoted this issue to the exploration of the ass. This is issue is titled *Butt Bomb* and is exclusively centered on butts, butt drawings, butt comics, and thoughts about butts. If you're in junior high school, or you never stopped thinking like you did in junior high, this will crack you up. C'mon it's poop humor, what else can I say about it? (CR)
32 N. Cook St / Portland, OR 97227

PICTURES / $1, $2 world, "I love trades"
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs
Yo, check the title—each page of this zine is a drawing Andy did. The pages would have to be as big as they are to capture the incredible, intricate detail he crams into each illustration. His technical skill is amazing, and he encourages everyone to copy & distribute his work, so you have no excuse for those dull-ass flyers anymore. As with his previous zine, reviewed here last year, the themes he is aiming at with his work are still somewhat heavy handed. Some I found a little more challenging, like his indictment of coffee in the workplace. I prefer more chaos and less sense in artwork, but *Pictures* gets mad props from me. The price is a major bargain, considering the hours that must have gone into each page. For my tastes, this isn't all it could be, but still it fucking rules. (JM)
Andy Calabrese / PO Box 2454 / Amherst, MA 01004
andy_939@hotmail.com

PLASTIC BOMB #62 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 74pgs – German
Plastic Bomb is a long running German punk/Oi! rag printed in that language. It's pretty glossy and slick looking, sort of like a German *Doll* or something. The main difference being that this is pretty solidly a punk zine, with some DIY coverage and quite a bit of Anti-Fascist stuff, which is cool to see. Lots of reviews and concert listings, every issue and comes with a Plastic Bomb Records catalog. Mandatory for the Deutschpunk enthusiast! (NM)
(www.plasticbomb.de)

PLASTIQUE POP #1 / $2 or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 38 pgs.
Plastique Pop—a cute and efficient mod/pop/rock 'n' roll fanzine with a crapload of interviews, including; '60s-inspired mod band The Insomniacs, garage punkers Double Dynamite, creators of the independent label Wee Rock Records, the three-piece Boys Club, the Danger, and also lo-fi record producer Jim Diamond. Also some in-depth record reviews and an account of the author's tour with his band, Plexi 3. (CH)
2421A S Kinnickinnic Ave / Milwaukee, WI 53207
www.myspace.com/adam_weird

POPULAR REALITY Vol. 786, #3 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Crossing the boundaries of reality, conspiracy and absurdity, this long running zine contains a nice sense of strange satire that reflects the fucked up world we live in. The combination of original writings, interesting illustrations, and cut-and-paste articles provides a fine variety and is reminiscent of the simple DIY zines that flooded the shelves back in the early '90s. One article, originally printed in the *New York Times*, reveals a frightening atomic research

endeavor going on in the EU that may spell doomsday in a way only imagined in a science fiction movie. If this unprecedented experiment goes awry, it could possibly create a black hole that would "eat the Earth." Yikes! Other articles borrowed from various sources read like a *News Of The Weird* collection, and it's bothersome knowing that all this shit is real. An interesting short fiction piece rounds off the issue. The cover price seems a bit steep for such a short copy job, but other than that, I give this a thumbs up. (BG)
PO Box 66426, Albany, NY 12206

RIOT 77 #12
8 x 11 – printed – 51 pgs
Clean looking magazine from Ireland that contains reviews, interviews, and scene reports that are not limited to the UK. The pictures in *Riot 77* are awesome, as well as the layout. The interviews of D.O.A., Streetdogs, The Slackers, Subhumans, The Threat, Legendary Shack Shakers, and the Dwarves are really dense and thorough.
Riot 77 Magazine c/o Cian Hynes / 31 Patricks Park / Clondalkin, Dublin 22 / Ireland

RATCHARGE #13 / $5
8.5 x 11.5 – copied– 36 pages
Even if I can't read it, I know a zine is happening if I open it and see a picture of Allergic To Bullshit tearing it up on the first page. *Ratcharge* is a cut and paste style hardcore fanzine from France, written in French. There's a whole lot of Black Flag pasted t-shirts and skateboards on these pages. You can also find translations of articles from other zines, record and zine reviews, and interviews with bands like Invasion, Heimat-Los, and more. Mohawks as far as the eye can see. (JD)
Alex Simon, 11 Rue Chalopin, 69007 Lyon, France
www.governmentjunkies.blogspot.com
xxgluestickxxbrigadexx@yahoo.fr

REAL HORRORSHOW #1 / $1.45ppd or trade, free for prisoners
5.5 x 8.5 – 16pgs – copied
Real Horrorshow is a simple cut 'n' paste zine full of playful randomness. In the sixteen pages we are treated to anxious thoughts of surprise shark attacks, ideas of the meaning behind "138," a retarded interview with a band called Nadir, a story about a curious prison trend, an idea for a punk-inspired license plate game, a punk rock crossword puzzle, insightful reviews of bands the author heard on the Radiobeat show, etc. *Real Horrowshow* is a whacked out, stream of conscious, pieced-together mess, and I look forward to seeing future issues. (CI)
Matty / PO Box 59 / Linwood, MA 01525

SCAM – THE STENCIL ART OF THE NEW ARGENTINA #6 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 56 pgs.
This issue of *Scam* takes us to the streets of Argentina, into the world of a vibrant stencil art scene blossoming out of the unrest of the Argentinean people, who, in 2001, in protest to the country's shoddy economy, "withdrew $135 billion from their bank accounts"—shutting the country down. Erick Lyle provides the political and social context of the movement, as well as tons of insightful and perceptive interviews with stencilers of a variety of objectives and goals. He examines the corporate co-opting of stenciling, and wonders where the "hallucinatory" art, and country, are heading. Lyle is an insightful and smart punk journalist who dives deep down to provide the whole picture—it seems like his writing is spurred by a genuine desire to understand his subject. (CH)
Erick Lyle / PO Box 40272 / SF, CA 94140
igscam@yahoo.com

SLINGSHOT #97 / $1
11.5x17.5 – newsprint – 16pgs
This spring commemorates twenty years that *Slingshot* has been printing. The pages of this issue (and all issue that I have seen) are packed with articles and reach across a wide majority of anarchist and politically aware subjects. There is a guide to customizing your bike. Free for prisoners. (SM)
Slingshot / 3124 Shattuck Ave / Berkeley CA 94704

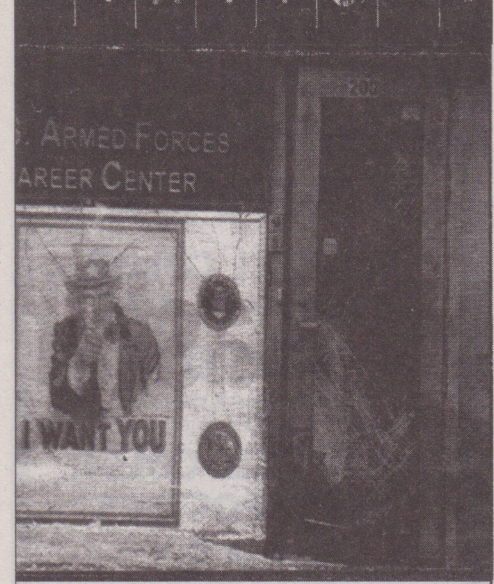
SORRY TREES #7 / $1 or trade
8.5x11 – copied – 26pgs
Sorry Trees is an interesting zine. For the most part the pages are filled with essay-like stories detailing random events in the life of the writer(s). I liked the idea better than the delivery though. The I'm-not-sure-what-I-have-been-reading-for-a-page-and-a-half-about-something-that-I-don't-really-understand feeling was there a lot of times. It's well written. Interviews with Leper and I Hate Your Music. (SM)
Sorry Trees / 330 W Philadelphia St. 1st floor / York, PA 17401
pointbforgood@hotmail.com

TRUST #128 / ?2.50
8.5 x 11 – printed– 72 pgs
This is a fancy-pants printed German language magazine that covers all things punk, hardcore, and underground. There's an awesome looking interview with The Gossip, something about NOFX, and a write-up about Steve Ignorant live in London in 2007. The cover is very stark with stylized high contrast black and white print, and the image is kind of obscene looking. *Trust* has a ton of record reviews that go all over the place including Xiu Xiu, Born/Dead, Dead Kennedys, XBXRX, and so much more. (JD)
Dolf Hermannstadter, Postfach 11 07 62, 28087 Bremen, Germany
dolf@trust-zine.de

WAKE UP SCREAMING #1 / no price listed
8.5 x 11 – copied – 52 pgs
Mostly made up of essays, original and reprinted, this Eugene, Oregon based zine does have a lot to read. The front half is dominated by rather depressing stories about jail and suicide, along with a polemic against romantic love. Another piece extensively details the globalization of prostitution, which often means sexual slavery. A more positive piece is the lengthy history of anti-fascist organizing in Portland. The editor also prints an essay he wrote for college about race and punk A few records and zines are reviewed, and there are almost no ads. Out of 10, I'd give this a 6—the quantity outdoes the quality, but only one piece is really terrible. This is more likely to appeal to people following the prosecutions of ELF activists and related issues, as much of it is in that vein. (JM)
PO Box 3 / Eugene, OR 97440
breakthechains02@yahoo.com

WHY DO ZOMBIES KEEP SHOWING UP IN MY DREAMS? / $2ppd or trade
3.5 x 5.5 – 32pgs – copied
Why Do Zombies Keep Showing Up In My Dreams? is a comic put together by the same guy that wrote *Insipidly Idaho*, which I reviewed elsewhere in this issue. $1 from each sale goes to support the SHAC 7. This photocopied zine is oddly made up of screen prints that look like linoleum cuts. The comics center around the idea of "hip gear for the apocalypse," and the drawings are annoyingly cute. I don't see the point in making something like this unless it is for art class. If you're a sucker for photocopied ironic activist art you might find this interesting. (CI)
EUTS 05 / 616 SE Harrison St / Portland, OR 97214

STATIONS



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http://www.sorrystaterecords.com

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Pedestrians . Killing Season EP
Solid Decline/Ruidosa Inmundicia . Split LP

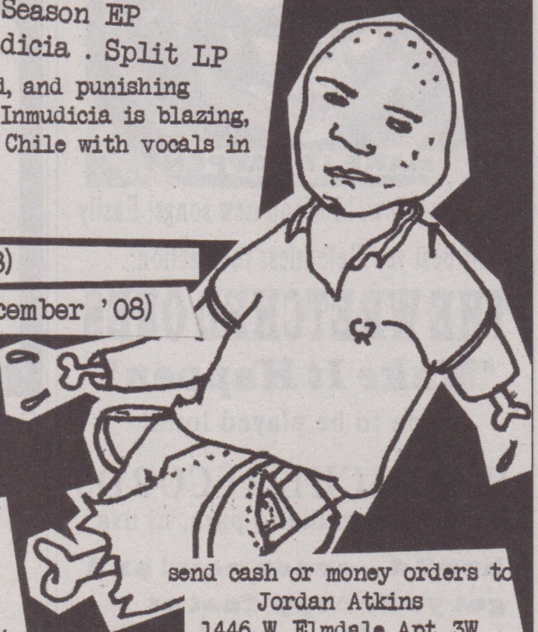
(Solid Decline plays unique, wild, and punishing hardcore from Germany, Ruidosa Inmudicia is blazing, pure hardcore from Austria via Chile with vocals in Spanish)

in the works:

No Slogan . LP (August '08)
Canadian Rifle . LP (December '08)

upcoming tours

Solid Decline (germany)
w/ Canadian Rifle
July/August '08



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1446 W. Elmdale Apt. 3W
Chicago, Il 60660 USA

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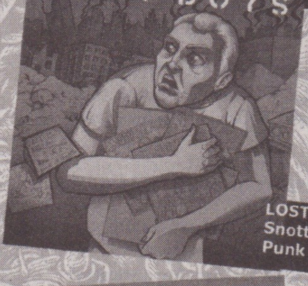

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Snotty 80's style
Punk Rock

RHYTHM SYNDROM
- Fatal Error 7"
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924 GILMAN

JUNE

Saturday 14 $6
The Lewd • Rum Rebellion (OR)
Thee Hobogobbelins • New Earth Creeps
Bandalism

Friday 20
Mindset (MD) •Foreign Nature

Saturday 21
Von Iva • Easy Street

Sunday 22 $7 • 4PM SHOW
M.D.C. (acoustic & ELECTRIC sets)
Instant Asshole • John The Baker (acoustic)
Crucial Cause • No Red Flags • Little Boy Blue

Friday 27 $7
Skarp (WA) • Population Reduction
Against Empire (LA) •Thousands Will Die
Self Inflicted

Saturday 28
Leftover Crack (NYC)
Wait In Vain (WA) • Crucified

JULY

Friday 04 $7
Black Cobra • Times Of Desperation
Lid Toker • Thou (LA) • Leech (OR)

Saturday 05
Die Young (TX) • Sabertooth Zombie
Lie and Wait (TX)

Sunday 06 $7 • 5PM SHOW
Limp Wrist • Lebenden Toten (OR)
Godstomper • Bruise Violet (L.A.)

Friday 11
Juke • Rich White Males • Atom Age

Saturday 12 $8-$10 • DOORS OPEN @ 7:30
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We like to meet people/bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

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PRINTING AND REPLICATION FOR INDEPENDENT RECORD LABELS AND BANDS SINCE 1994

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ATTENTION CLASSIFIEDS READERS: WHEN RESPONDING TO THESE ADS REMEMBER THAT THE WORLD OF MRR READERS IS NOT A PUNK ROCK UTOPIA WHERE EVERYONE IS LOOKING OUT FOR EVERYONE ELSE AND WE'RE ALL COOL... BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU TELL PEOPLE AND BE CAREFUL WHO YOU SEND MONEY TO. THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE IN PUNKLAND WHO WILL TRY TO RIP YOU OFF, EXPLOIT YOU OR MANIPULATE YOU. REALLY, IT'S TRUE.

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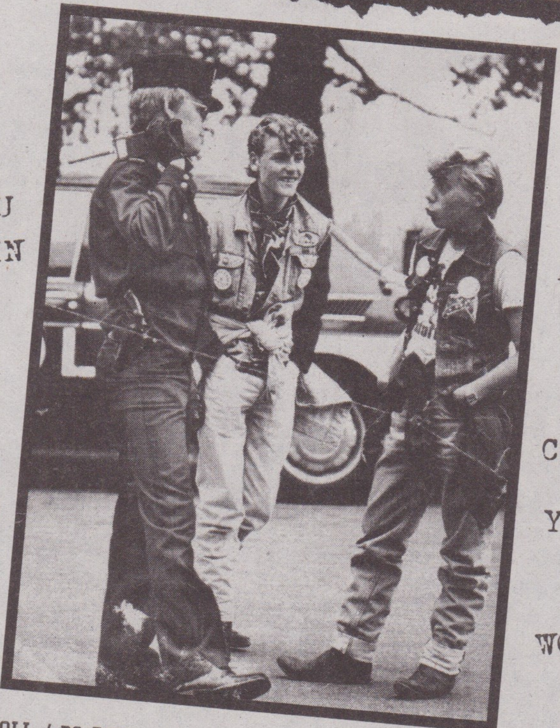

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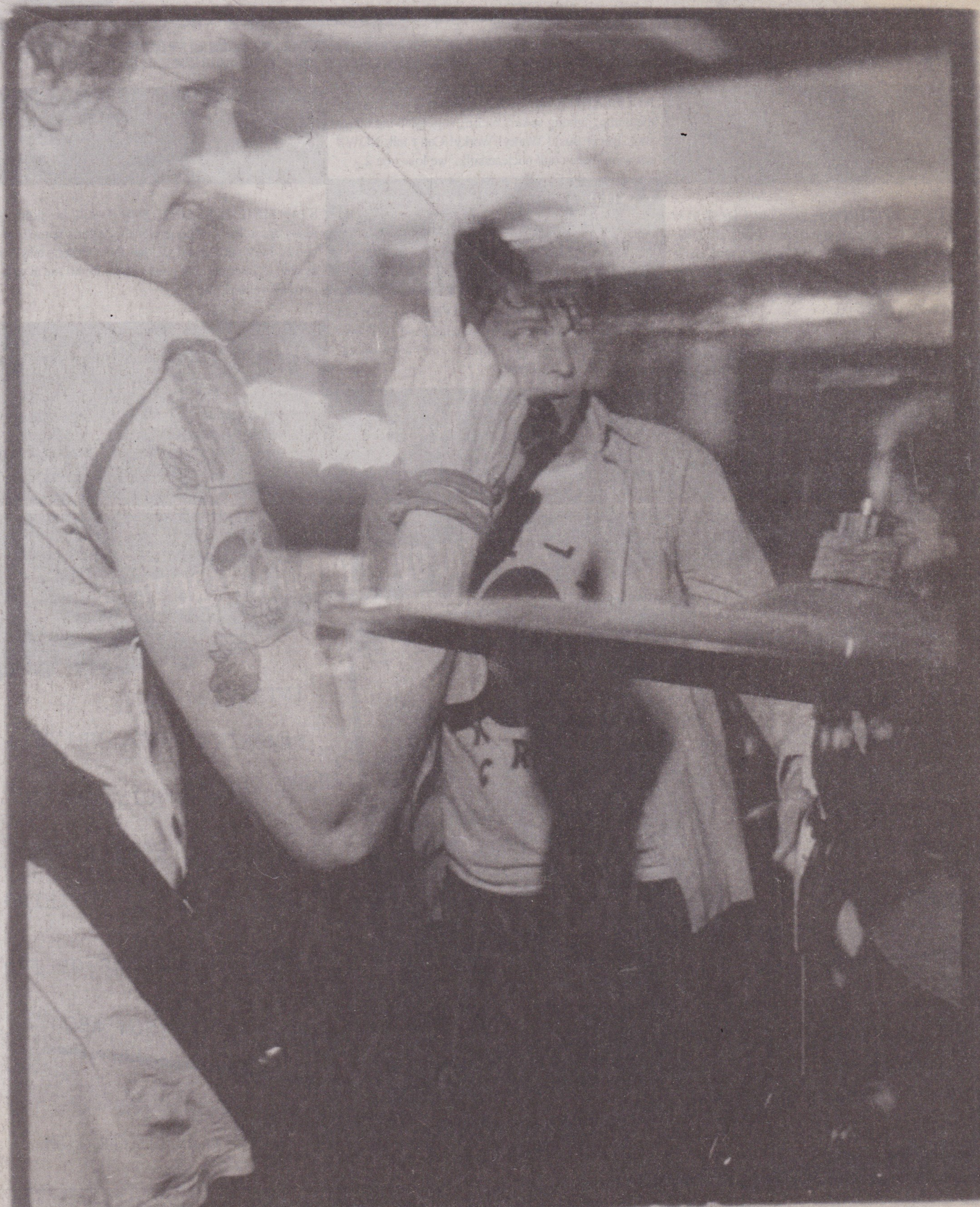
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